מכתב מיקבי היין "כרמל מזרחי" מזכרון יעקב, שנשלח באמצעות הדואר
האוסטרי דרך חיפה לאלכסנדריה ב־13.IX.14.

Letter from the winegrowers "Carmel Oriental" from Zichron Jacob dispatched per Austrian post via Haifa to Alexandria, on 14 September 1913. See article (p. 166):

A Short History and the Postal History of Haifa up to 1948
by Gotfried G. Cohen

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Arms of the town of Haifa

* Due to the length of the first article, our regular sections of new cancellations and of new stamps are not
 published in this issue and are postponed to the next one.

A Short History and the Postal History of Haifa up to 1948*

by Golfried G. Cohen, Amsterdam

CONTENTS

Introduction

On the next pages we will describe in short the history and the postal history of Haifa. We made use of many previously published publications and articles. We did not try to reach completeness and the bibliography at the end indicates the way to enter more deeply into certain aspects of the material discussed. There is no doubt that new finds and research will alter much of what now seems fact.

The history of the post in Haifa is indivisible from the general cultural development and history of the town. The postal services depend on the growth and fading of the town, on wars, on trade relations and cultural developments.

Moreover it is only possible to understand a local postal history in the context of what happened in the region of the place. This is the reason attention is paid, perhaps more than expected in a philatelic history, to the development of Haifa from a muddy fishing village to a wealthy harbour city and also to the history of postal connections in the Holy Land in a broader aspect.

Haifa has a very interesting history and postal history and as far as known to us, these have never been investigated into until now. We have attempted to do so.

We thank everybody who was helpful with advice or help.

Amsterdam, 1987

General Data

a. A possible division of the history of Palestine and specificly of Haifa, is as follows:

Late Bronze Age		Appr. 1500 - 1200 BC
	exodus from Egypt	Appr. 1250 BC
Iron Age		Appr. 1200 - 586 BC
	King David	Appr. 1004 - 965 BC
	Eliah the prophet	Appr. 870 - 840 BC
Babylonian/Persian era		586 - 332 BC
Hellenistic era		332 - 152 BC
Maccabean (Hasmonean)		152 - 63 BC
Roman era		63 BC - 330 AD
Byzantine era		330 - 640
Arab period I		640 - 1099
Crusaders		1099 - 1291
Arab period II		1291 - 1517
Ottoman (Turkish) era		1517 - 1918
British Mandate		1918 - 1948
State of Israel		from 1948

b. In the Bible there is no reference to a place called Haifa. The area of the town was a part of the possessions of the Asher tribe in Joshua's time. The border with the tribe of Mannaseh was the highest ridge of the Carmel mountain.

The Carmel is mentioned in the Bible at several places, among others in Samuel I: Abigail, King David's wife, came from the Carmel; Kings I: the prophet Eliah's

struggle with the priests of Baal during King Ahab's reign; Kings II: the prophet Elisha heals the son of the Sunamitic woman, and among other examples at Jesaia (33 and 35) Jeremia (50) and Amos (1).

The first mention of Haifa comes from the Talmud, (3rd - 4th century) as the place from where a man departs for a sea journey to a faraway land and also as the place of birth of rabbi Avdimos and some other learned men. The grave of rabbi Avdimos of Haifa can be found even today at the old graveyard. Furthermore the Talmud tells us that the Murex shell was found to the north of Haifa. The purple dye made from this shell was used to dye prayer garments.

The tomb of rabbi Avdimos of Haifa

Inscription on the grave of rabbi Avdimos of Haifa

c. From the year 000 AD, the number of inhabitants o approximately as follows:

	total	Jewish
000 AD	600	300
appr. 640	500	250
appr. 1100	2.000	1.300
appr. 1300	350	200
appr. 1500	150	50
appr. 1600	1.600	200
appr. 1700	1.800	300
appr. 1800	300	100
appr. 1850	2.100	250
appr. 1880	6.000	400
appr. 1900	10.000	2.000
appr. 1910	20.000	4.000
appr. 1920	30.000	12.000
appr. 1930	50.000	25.000
appr. 1940	90.000	50.000
appr. 1950	150.000	130.000
appr. 1960	180.000	160.000
appr. 1970	220.000	200.000

General History

1. Haifa in the Past

Map with the locations marked of Abu Hawan, Shiqmona, Bat Galim and the St. Brocard monastery (Kh. ed-Deir)

With the exception of some dispersed ruins, the oldest remains of what is today Haifa are found in Tel Abu Hawan, a little fishing harbour at the mouth of the Kishon River, which was inhabited in the Late Bronze period (ca.. 1400 BC). It was situated north of the road to Megiddo, (more or less at the spot where today the Firebrigade is located). Abu Hawan was inhabited by the Phoenicians till the Babylonian/Persian era (ca. 400 BC), thereafter it was abandoned, probably because the mouth of the river had silted up.

Connected with Haifa are two more settlements: Sycaminum (Shiqmona) and Porphyrion (Bat Galim). Shiqmona is located southwest of the Oceanic Institute of today, the Tel is still clearly visible. It was already inhabited during King David's days (ca. 1000 BC).

In the ruins were found cooking pots, oil lamps and seals pointing to an uninterrupted occupation until the Byzantine era.

Bat Galim is from the Roman period. During the second Jewish revolt led by Simon-Bar-Kochba (ca. 135 AD) a Roman fort stood here, later named Castra Samaritanum because the Romans brought Samaritans to the place. Bat Galim kept its ancient name till today.

Seal from Late Bronze with the name of Pharao Seti I (1318 - 1304 BC), found in Tel Shiqmona.

The territory of the Maccabeans led by Alexander Jannai (103 - 76 BC) extended up to the Carmel coast, but did not reach Haifa; this is the reason that we find no Hashmonaic remainders there.

The story is told that Vespasian made a sacrifice on the Carmel mountain after he was named emperor. The main road of the Romans went from Acre to the south, east of the Carmel. There, between Kiriat Ata and Kfar Chassidim, a Roman milestone was found. From the Byzantine era only in Shiqmona some remains were found: foundations of houses and a church.

A monastery, dedicated to the prophet Eliah, already existed near the spring of Eliah in Wadi Ein-es-Siah, on the west slope of the Carmel, at about the year 500. In the later Middle Ages St. Brocardus was venerated as having been the Prior there. The Carmelites settled here, we will refer to them in another chapter. To our regret, the vicinity of Haifa is not reconstructable on the Madaba map from the year 560. In contrast to Acre, Askalon and Gaza, Haifa never minted its own coins.

2. The First Arab Period (640 - 1099)

In the year 638 Jerusalem fell to the hands of the attacking Arabs and, in 640, all of Palestine, Syria and Egypt were conquered under the banner of Islam. During this Arab period not much is known about Haifa. The Persian traveller Nasir-i-Khuran writes in 1046 that ships were built in Haifa. These must have been little ships with flat bottoms, designated for the trade with Egypt. Khuran also mentions the many date-palms and the beautiful sand beaches, the sand of which was used by the goldsmiths of Damascus. In the Geniza (a manuscript storeroom) of the Cairo synagogue, letters were found telling about a shipowner from Haifa, a Jewish business-man named Mufaddah al-Haifa.

Turkish stamp (597)-The Omar Mosque in Jerusalem, built in 691

The town must have had a certain prosperity, perhaps as a result of the fact that a few Jewish families from Tiberias settled in the town in the eighth and ninth centuries. In this period the Jewish sect of the Karaites was founded and there are indications of the existence of a Karaite community in Haifa in the ninth century. At the end of the eleventh century, Haifa was walled in; it became a town where Muslims and Jews lived together in harmony. Eliah ha-Cohen, the Gaon (religious leader) of Palestine called for a gathering of Rabbis in Haifa in the year 1099.

The fort, built by the Kalif to oppose the threat of the Crusaders, was turned over for management to the inhabitants of Haifa, the majority of which were Jewish, at appr. 1090.

This first period of prosperity of Haifa came to an end in 1099, when the Crusaders under Tancred, reinforced by a Venetian fleet, laid siege to the town, and conquered it.

3. The Crusaders (1099 - 1291)

With the Crusaders a new chapter began in the history of Haifa. We know a few things about the siege and the battle for the town.

The Crusaders called the town Caiaphas, after the High Priest known in the New Testament whom they thought had founded the town. They were of the opinion that Haifa was "opposing God more than any other place, because of its strong walls and the exaggerated pride of its inhabitants." The Crusaders ringed the town with siege engines and closed the coastal side totally enabling the Venetian fleet to play an important role in the siege.

Venice was engaged with a fleet of 200 ships and should have received as a result the privilege of freedom of all trade with the occupied territories. They succeeded very well. But it is known that Haifa also traded with Ancona and not exclusively with Venice.

Texts concerning the siege of Haifa by the Crusaders mention a heroic resistance of the garrison which was mostly Jewish. The resistance was so strong that Tancred considered giving up the siege. Only a strong command by the Patriarch of the already Christian Jerusalem made him continue. When the town was conquered eventually, all the inhabitants that could not flee were murdered. Haifa remained in the beginning in the possession of Tancred (a Norman knight, one of the most famous commanders of the Crusaders), but in 1102 he gave the town to Baldwin I, and from 1118 Haifa was part of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

It seems that Jews settled again in Haifa during the first century of the Crusader era. The town built a fort (Castrum) again but in importance it remained behind other towns like Acre and Atlith. A pilgrim in 1180 noticed that Caifa had no bishop of its own, but belonged to the archbishop of Ceasarea.

In 1187 Saladin recaptured Haifa, but in 1192, according to an interim armistice, it was given to the "Franks". Among other buildings, they built in Haifa a hospital for their wounded, but much more primitive than in Acre. In the

Crusader's seal from Haifa: left - dni Caypha/S'Garsia Alvarez; right - Castrum Caife
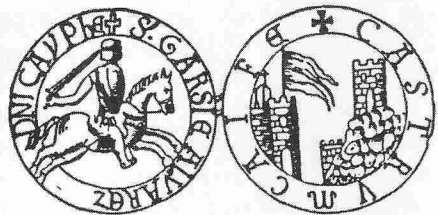
thirteenth century Haifa became the capital of the "Seigneurie" Haifa. The generation of knights "Garcia Alvarez" were the rulers in 1250 when Haifa again knew some prosperity as the export harbour of Tiberias. In the year 1211 something very special happened: 300 Rabbis from France and England came to the Holy Land and settled along the coast, including Haifa. A flourishing Jewish community grew there, well known for its high level of learnedness. One of the learned men who came in those years to Palestine was Rabbi Moses ben Nachman,

the famous Nachmanides (1194 - 1270), His grave is said to be in Haifa, next to the grave of another learned man: Jehiel ben-Joseph from Paris.
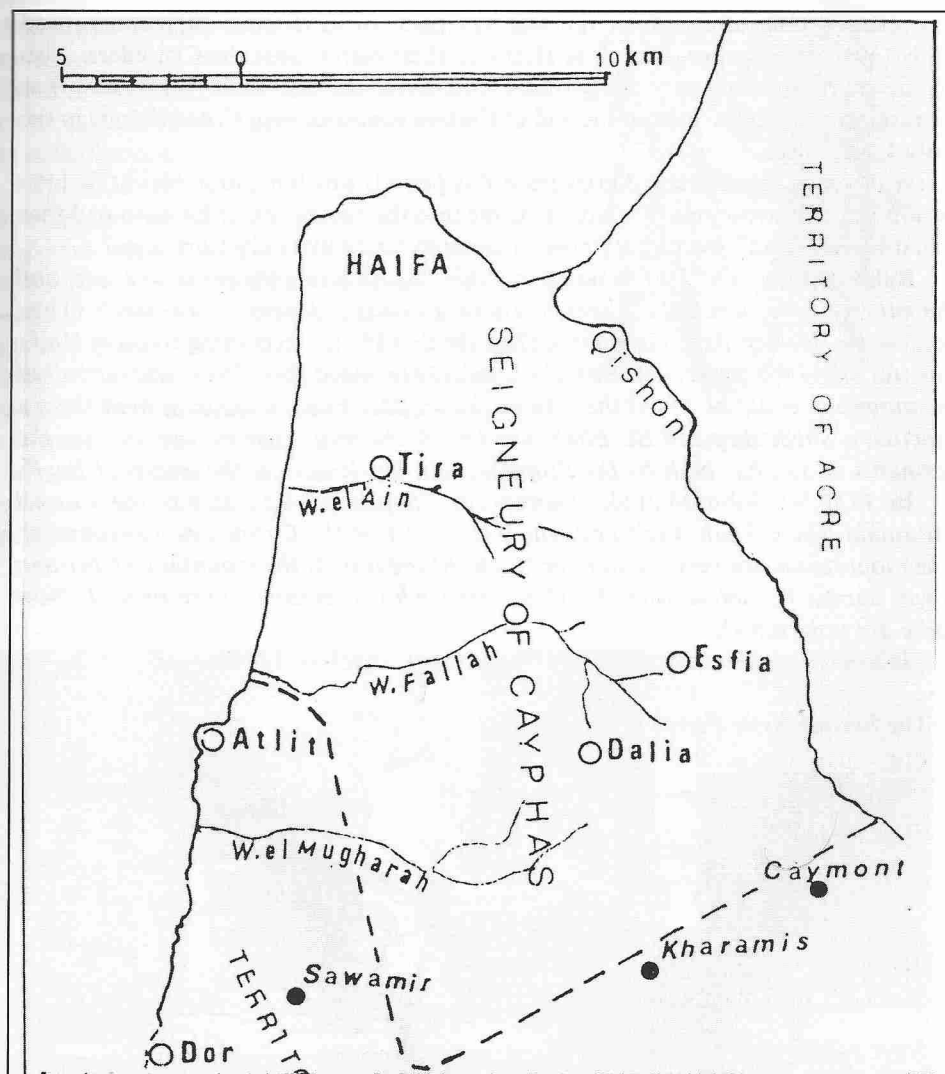
Map of the "Seigneurie of Cayphas" from ca. 1250

Louis IX, the Saint, King of France also played a role in the development of Haifa. In 1246, during his first Crusade, as result of a storm, he was put ashore at the foot of the Carmel where the monks of the St. Brocard Monastery offered him their hospitality. Louis proclaimed himself protector of the monastery and promised his aid to the monks. He rebuilt the walls of Haifa in 1249 and from

that moment the French influence was felt, and the name "French Carmel" is still used for the surroundings of the Carmelite Monastery.

Louis was taken captive in 1250 by the Egyptian Mameluks near Damiette and was released only after a high ransom was paid. In 1291 these Mameluks razed many towns in Palestine, including Haifa, in their war against the Crusaders. Also the newly-built monastery was totally destroyed. In the same year Acre was captured also and this marked the end of the two centuries long Crusader rule in the Holy Land.

We know a few journey diaries from this period, which mention Haifa. In 1103 bishop Seawulf wrote that "Caiaphas" came into the possession of Baldwin and that it had been a "bad" town, but "now fortunately there live only Christians".

Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela noted in 1163: *"Kaifa meets the sea at one side, and the other side touches the Carmel. There are many Jewish grave-sites."* (This, because the Jews of Acre also buried their dead in Haifa. According to them Haifa was still inside the borders of the Holy Land.). *He added that, "Near the summit of the mountain could be found the cave of the prophet Eliah. Christians built there a sanctuary which they call St. Eliah. On top of the mountain we can still see the remnants of an altar built by the Prophet in his battle against the priests of Baal".*

In 1322 Sir John Maundeville reports: *"South of Acre stands the Carmel Mountain where Eliah dwelt and where the order of the Carmelites was founded. The mountain is not very big nor very high. At the foot of the mountain a Christian town, named Caiaphas after the High-priest who founded it, once existed. Now there are only ruins".*

It seems that the Mameluks did "good work" back in 1291 ...

4. The Second Arab Period (1291 - 1517)
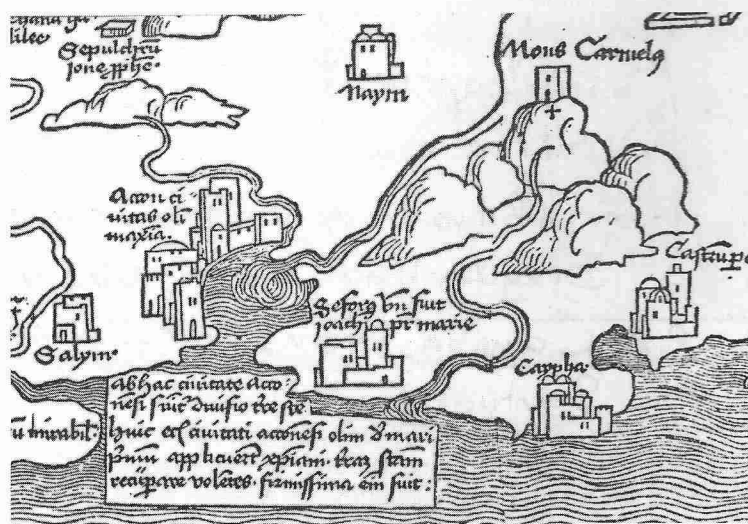
Part of Bernhard von Breydenbach map of 1483 on which Haifa, Mons Carmel and the Sanctuary are marked among others.

After the Crusaders were driven out, the Mame-
lukes ruled in Palestine for a few centuries,
including of course Haifa. During this period
Haifa was a little village of no importance,
probably with no permanent inhabitation, though
Christian and Jewish pilgrims came there to pray
in the cave of Eliah. Little is known about Haifa
from this period.

In 1333 the town was visited by Rabbi
Jitzchak Hilo of Larissa (Greece), who noted that
he found learned men in Haifa and that he saw
many graves of learned men. The importance of
Haifa in those years is small; it shows also in the
fact that it was subordinated as "Khan Haifa" to
Atlith. The Mameluk rulers were weakened very
much by internal strife and in the end they could
not measure their strength against the dynamic
Ottoman Empire, which conquered Syria end
Palestine in 1517 and a little later, all of the
Middle East.

Mameluks
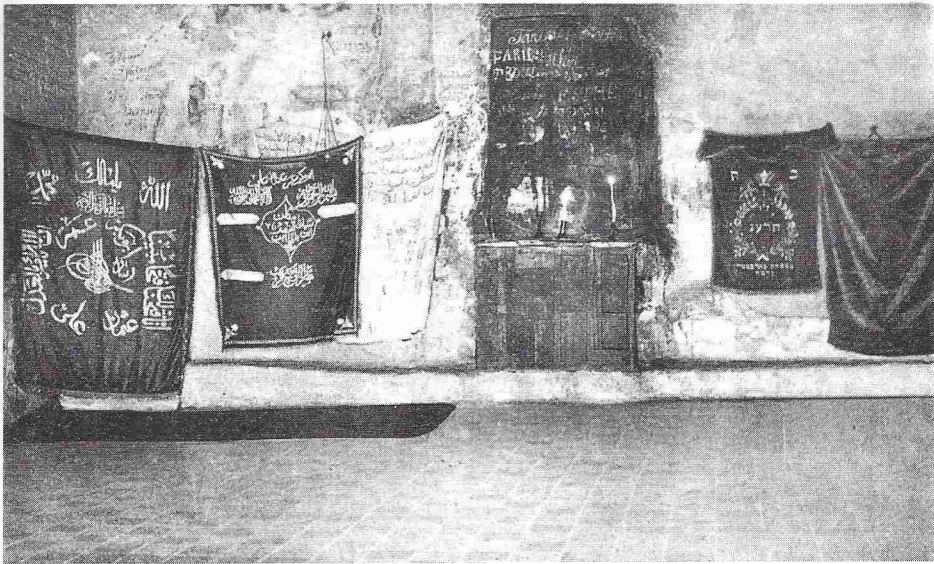
Haifa: The cave of Eliah

Pilgrims in the Holy Land, ca. 1275, riding on donkeys.

5. The Ottoman (Turkish) Era I (1517 - ca. 1850)

Haifa about 1690

With the rapid conquest of the Holy Land by the Ottoman Turks, Haifa came under the rule of Sultan Selim I, which meant under the rule of Constantinople.

In the beginning of the 16th century Haifa was more or less a deserted town. In 1575 the German traveller Rauwulf describes Haifa as "a ruined village" but later it surfaced again in travel reports. The number of inhabitants in this period reached about 1600. The influence of the Sultan in Constantinople diminished constantly and from the 17th century onwards it was normal in the Turkish Empire to leave the outer provinces, like Palestine, more and more to the regional Sheikhs who often fought violently with each other. This was also true of the North of Palestine. Here Fahr-ad-Din (1583-1635) acquired a little state, starting from the Lebanon, which included Haifa.

Haifa's harbour gained in recognition and useful-ness as an emergency harbor next to Acre. On a map from the year 1651 the town is already mentioned as "Harbor Haifa". There was already a hearty rivalry with Acre. The Dutch Vice-Consul in Acre, Abraham van Ritshoven, wrote in 1630 to Cornelis Witsen, Consul of the 'Staten-Generaal' (The United Nether-lands) in Aleppo, about the many ships which divert themselves from Acre to Haifa. This "disturbed the Emir very much", and he threatened to let the Consuls in Acre pay the import duties he now lacked.

The town had already very early close relations with Malta. The Maltese pirates found in Haifa a port where they could freely trade their stolen goods and the contacts were so close that Haifa was called "Little Malta" in those days.
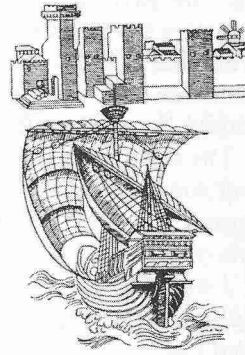
Pilgrims and trade vessel from the 16th century

The French traveller Thevenet told, in his diary from 1655, the story of being robbed by a Maltese pirate, just out of Haifa, and being undressed literally to his underclothes. Incidentally he calls Haifa "a beautiful village" and praises the impressive remnants of the St. Brocard Monastery. In 1698 a Dutch ship, 'De Soriaanse Coopman' is mentioned. It was captured by the French while on its way from Haifa to Amsterdam. It was loaded with wood for a Catholic chapel in Amsterdam and with cotton and rice. In Acre, Haifa was called in those days, 'a miserable village'.

In the meantime the harbour of Acre was not extended and was more and more congested, so a larger number of ships went to Haifa. Christian traders and pilgrims had fewer problems and struggles to achieve their goals in Haifa than in the often fanatic Islamic Acre. In 1742 Haifa had again a Jewish Community with a synagogue. In 1750 the community was reinforced with some families from Morocco.

In the year 1761 we hear again from the Dutch Vice-Consul in Acre. He complains about the double import tax to be paid for goods with destination Acre which were unloaded in Haifa and transported in little boats to Acre. The double pay evolved because of a strife between the Pashas of Acre and Damascus. Haifa in that time belonged to Damascus. His letter to the Netherlands went, as usual for that time, via Constantinople and Venice. About 1762 the Netherlands had a special

correspondent in Vienna who arranged the transfer of letters via Aleppo and Beirouth.

In the 18th century the wealth of Haifa grew and at the end of the century the taxes paid were twenty fold the tax revenue of 1710.

About 1750 Sheikh Dahir-al-Umar ruled the territory, and looked after order, justice and security. The town of Haifa however was situated on a spot which was difficult to defend with some rocks in front of its coast and only a small amount of fresh water. Only sixty soldiers could live in its fort. Dahir-al-Umar did not wait long : he gave an order to raze all of the old city and build a new town two kilometers to the East, a spot where the bay was quiet, the coastal plain wider and the number of fresh-water sources larger. The only remnants of the old town are the streetname El Atiqa and a few catacombs along the railway line. The new Haifa was enclosed by a 630 meter long wall with a tower on all four corners.

The town developed rapidly; it was situated at the place of the old part of the lower town of today. In 1777 the Flemish traveler Joannes Rotthier wrote in his 'Journey to the Holy Land': *"The Carmel mountain is more than three hours from Acre, you can reach it by land or by sea.*

I went there by sea, which gave less trouble. One leaves the ship at a village called Caipha, where you have to pay the Pasha a 'caffar' or impost of 20 medines."

Rotthier talks about a pleasant scenery, fig trees and a little hospital of the Carmelites: "a little monastery with some German religious people." The 'caffar' he mentioned was a personal toll which was levied on many roads, e.g. on the road from Haifa to Megiddo and between Haifa and Lydda. Toll was levied on the roads, also on goods like cotton, rice, olives.

In 1798/99 Napoleon reached Palestine on his invasion into Egypt. After the capture of Jaffa, where the French murdered 3.000 civilians, the army advanced toward Acre, which however withstood the siege. Already in 1798 the

Wall and fort of Haifa

Turks had transferred all cannons from Haifa to Acre as   advised by the English.

Later Napoleon would write in his memories: "It was better to pass around the Mount Carmel at the side of the Esdraelon Plane, and not to use the road along the sea which leads to Haifa, because this road is easy to defend. General Allenby would do the same in 1918!

The French sent their sick and wounded to the Carmelite monastery and

Caiffe le vieux

*Chateau
Caiffe le neuf*

Echelle de 4 lieues

CAIFFE

S. Jean d'Acre
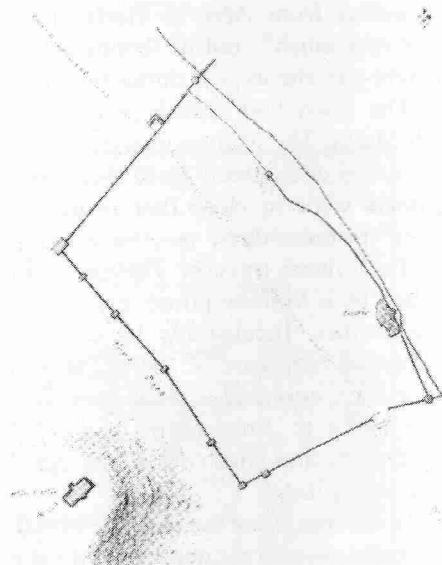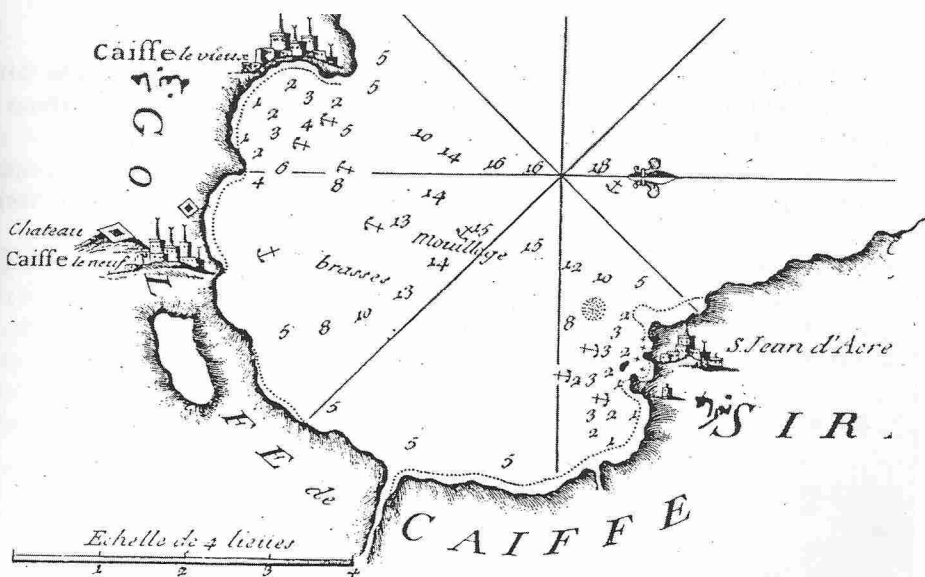
*The bay of Haifa from Joseph Roux's atlas, 1764. Both old and New Haifa are
indicated as well as sea depths.*

hospital in Haifa to be cared for. After the French retreat the Turks returned and
killed all French wounded and chased away the monks. The monks returned later
and buried the French soldiers in the garden of the monastery.

On the grave a monument was placed which can be seen to this day. As a result
of these cruelties Haifa was left with not much more than 200 inhabitants. From
1831 until 1840 Haifa was under the rule of the Egyptian general Mohammad Ali,
who promoted the development of the town, and whose influence brought calm and
progressive atmosphere.

In the year 1836 a new monastery church was officially inaugurated. The big
earthquake of 1837 left Haifa with
hardly any damage.

The British Jewish philanthropist
Sir Moses Montefiori and his wife
Judith Cohen visited Haifa, taking
part in a religious service in a
synagogue, and praising the town in
their report.

In 1838 a number of Jewish
families from Morocco travelled to
Palestine. Their boat was wrecked in
Haifa bay and twelve of the immi-
grants drowned. In 1839 the English-
man Roberts made his famous

*Monument for the murdered French soldiers
at the Carmelite monastery*

drawing 'View of Haifa', with this shipwreck in the foreground.

Incidentally, many ships were wrecked on the Palestine coast. On 24th February, 1849 the French Consular Agent wrote to his superior in Acre about a quarrel in Haifa concerning a shipwreck at the coast, south of the Carmel.

In 1857, a number of Jewish families settled in Haifa. In Acre a fanatic anti-Christian and anti-Jewish atmosphere was still dominant and the harbour of Acre
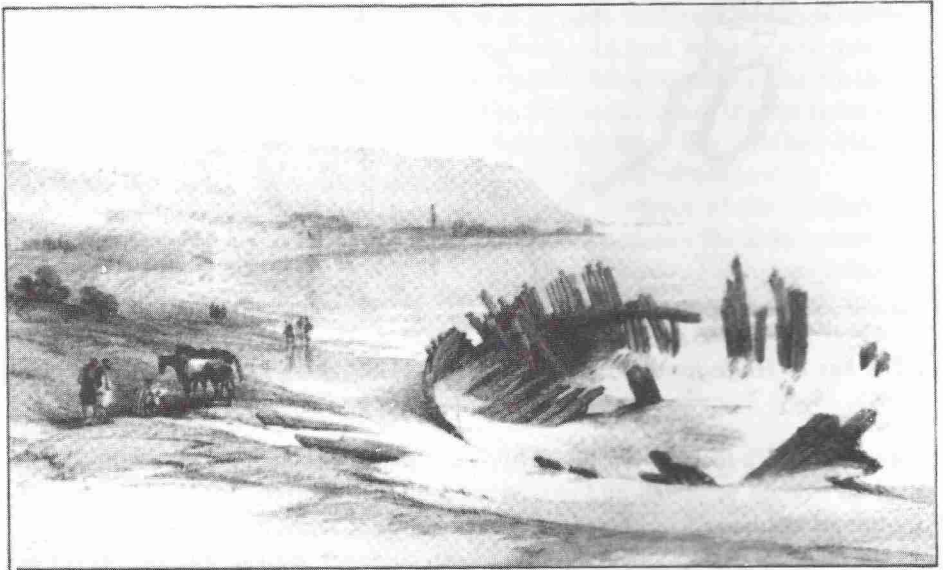
Robert's view of Haifa from 1839, with a shipwreck

turned out to be less convenient for the ships which increased in size constantly. For this reason a number of European shipping companies started choosing Haifa as a harbour on their way along the east coast of the Mediterranean; among others, the French 'Services Maritimes des Messageries Nationales' (later called 'Messageries Maritimes'), from 1853; the Austrian Lloyd, from 1854 and the Russian ROPiT, from 1856.

A number of Consular Offices were now located in Haifa. These were the years when the prephilatelic era of Haifa ends - The first post offices and modern postal services appear. The way the post in the Holy Land was handled before the philatelic era, will be described in a special chapter later.

6. The Ottoman (Turkish) Era II (ca. 1850 - 1918)

After the middle of the 19th century important changes started in Haifa. At about 1850 the town didn't have a good reputation. The Dutchman Van der Velde wrote in his extensive travel-report of 1851/52 about Haifa: *"It is the dirtiest town I ever met, the streets are just mudpools; you sink in a foot or two the moment you pass through the gate. A rain-shower makes a terrible stink rise, as I learned by experience."*

It seems that Van der Velde came at the wrong time! Haifa grew and in 1858 the town had filled the space inside the walls, so the first houses on the lower slopes of the Carmel were built. It was important for the town that the harbour of Haifa was much more convenient for the steamships, which grew larger and larger, than the harbour of Acre.

In 1868 a very important phase in the history of Haifa began with the arrival of a group of "Templer Colonists" from Germany. To them and to their part in the development of the town we have dedicated a special chapter.

Haifa's growth was partly due to the birth of modern Zionism which urged thousands of Western Jews to settle in the Holy Land. The influx of Western immigrants changed the character of the community in a distinct way and made this retarded province of the Turkish Empire carve out its own place in the world.
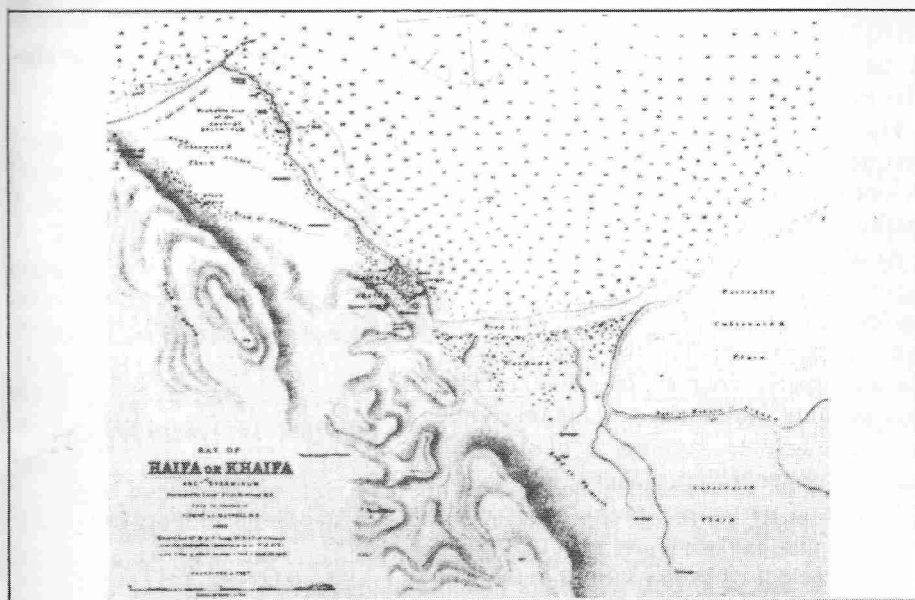
Mansell - Bedfoni: The Bay of Haifa in 1862

Haifa received international recognition as a result of the many letters and articles that were written by Lawrence Oliphant, a British journalist, Member of Parliament and Diplomat. He wrote in the years 1882/85 to the 'New York Sun' of the time he lived in the German (Templer) Colony. In later years he had a beautiful villa built in the Druse village of Dalyat al-Carmel. Oliphant gave a colorful description of the daily life in Haifa, of the activities of its inhabitants and especially about the conflict between the Templer-Colonists and the Carmelites.

Haifa suffered in those days from a lack of water; many new wells were dug. In the winter of 1902/03 the town was put into quarantine as a result of a cholera epidemic.

On the 25th of October 1898 the German Emperor Wilhelm II landed in Haifa for his visit to the Holy Land. He was received enthusiastically especially by the Templer Colonists. A monument, still to be seen on the Carmel, reminds us of his visit. The Emperor Wilhelm stayed only for a short time in Haifa and continued to Jerusalem where his camp was situated. He stayed for a week in Palestine and met, among others, with Theodor Herzl, the father of political Zionism.

The visit of the German Emperor was an important step in the strengthening of German - Turkish relations which led to the instruction and training of the Turkish army by German officers and the choosing of Turkey for the German side in the First World War.

Theodor Herzl realised during his visit to Palestine the great importance of Haifa for the developement of the country. He wrote about it in enthusiastic terms in his book 'Altneuland'.

At about the end of the century one more religion made itself manifest in Haifa: the Bahai. Its golden Dome dominates the panorama of the town impressively. To the Bahai we also dedicate a special chapter. In 1904 the German Vice-Consul of Haifa noted in his yearly report that the maritime commerce of Haifa was already three times that of Acre.

In 1906 a narrow-gauge railway connected Haifa with the Damascus railway to Hedjaz. The railway made it possible for a big stream of pilgrims to pass through Haifa on their way to Mecca from North-Africa. The railway also served the export of grain from Syria which led to the construction of big grain-silos. In 1912 a railway connection with Acre was established.

Lawrence Oliphant: writer diplomat and traveller

Monument on the Carmel to commemorate the visit of Emperor Wilhelm II in 1898 in Palestine

In 1909 the German-Jewish Terrain Gesellschaft bought a piece of land at the place which is now called Hadar ha-Carmel for RM 80,000. It was designated for modern housing for immigrants. In 1912 Davis Trietsch wrote in his 'Palestina Handbuch' that Haifa had 20.000 inhabitants: 7.000 Muslims, 11.000 Christians and 2.000 Jews. One of the new inhabitants was Elias Auerbach who did much for good relations between Jews and Arabs in Haifa. Haifa had two good hotels: the Jewish Herzlia-Hotel and the German Carmelhotel. Haifa had four doctors and even a veterinary surgeon. There were some small

View of Haifa, 1906

hospitals (a Jewish one with 15 beds) and three banks: the Banque Ottomane, the Deutsche Palestina Bank and the Anglo-Palestine Bank which also housed the Tourist Office.

In 1910 Paul Nathan from the 'Deutsche Hilfsverein', together with the Tea importer K.Z. Wissotsky, started to buy land on the Carmel to found a technical school. They succeeded, after some difficulties with the Turkish authorities and in 1913 the first building of what later would be the Technion was inaugurated. After a fierce battle it was decided on 15th November that the language at the Technion would be the modern Hebrew. This decision helped much with the acceptance of Hebrew as the official language of the Jewish community and later of the State of Israel.

In the meantime the harbour flourished, industry started to develop, education was, as a rule, given in Catholic schools and the town grew with new neighbourhoods and streets. In 1911 a start was made with the enlargment of the harbour with dikes and dams at the same time gaining land from the sea. With the construction of jetties the greater water depth enabled sea-going ships to unload directly to the shore.

The majority of Jewish inhabitants lived in downtown Haifa, in the Jewish Quarter called Harat-el-Jahud, but a small part had already settled on the lower part of the Carmel mountain. The majority of the citizens worked in agriculture: olives, fruit, grapes and wheat. More work was found in the harbour and in the growing industries such as soap and olive oil production.

The development of the town had, of course, also a beneficial influence on its Arabic citizens. The Arabs made big progress socially and materially. In 1909, the first Arabic magazine in Palestine, 'Al-Carmel', appeared in Haifa.
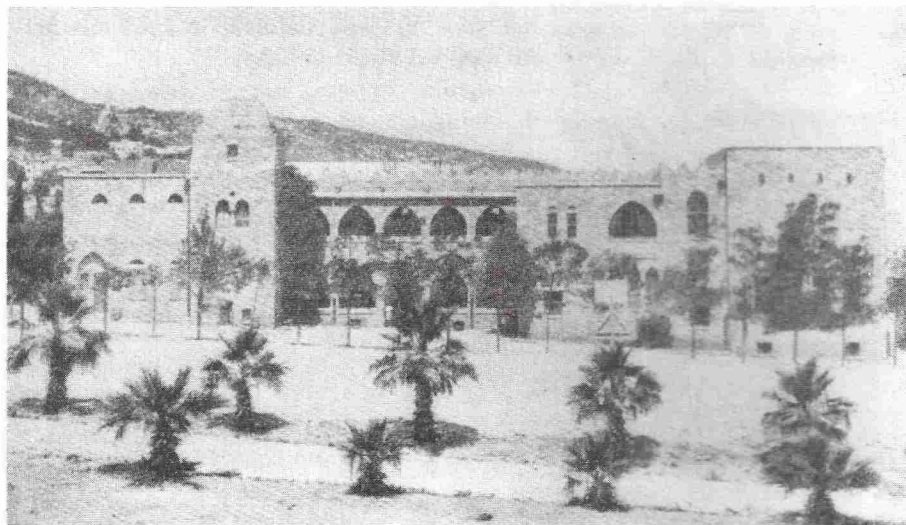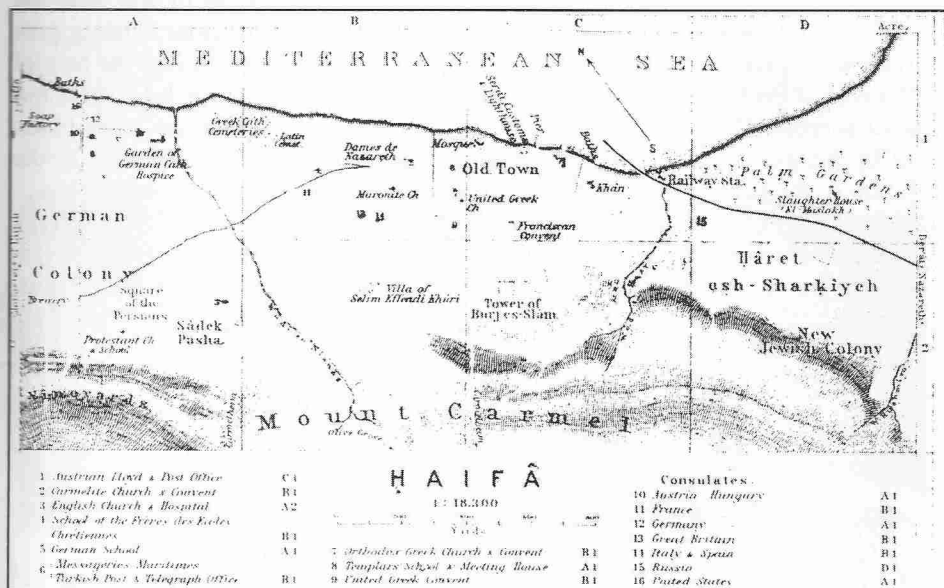
The Technion building in 1916

The old Jewish Quarter in Haifa

7. The Consular Offices.

Map of Haifa from the 1912 Baedeker with the location of some consulates.

After the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, the contact between them and the West diminished. France was the first (in 1535) to sign a treaty with the Sultan by which certain contacts were renewed. In 1580 England followed suit and slowly most European countries renewed their relations with Turkey. Extensive treaties were signed with the new ruler in the East and in many places of the Turkish Empire consular offices appeared. In the beginning of the 19th century most European states had consuls or vice-consuls in all important localities of the Ottoman Empire. Two categories of consulates existed:

1. The countries with so-called 'Capitulation Treaties', with extensive liberties for their subjects: Austria, France, England, Italy, Germany and Russia.
2. The other countries.

It was the task of the Consuls to safeguard the legal, religious and economic interests of their compatriots. The might of Turkey decreased slowly in those days and the treaties were upgraded continually and gave the foreign countries more liberties and power in the Turkish Empire. France became the protector of the Roman Catholics, Russia of the Greek Orthodox, and England of the Protestants and the Jews. They were also responsible for the protection of pilgrims and the supervision of hospitals, banking institutes and religious buildings. A number of consular services also acquired the right to maintain their own postal service, meant in principle for their own subjects only.

The Turkish authorities did not like the existence of these foreign postal

services. They saw them, rightly, as a threat to their sovereignty but were unable to withstand the strong pressures exerted on them (e.g., a few ships of war near the Bosphorus). Of course the Turks did everything they could to close existing post offices and to prevent the opening of new ones. They even tried to win the help of the Universal Postal Union of which Turkey was a member since July 1875, but without success. The only thing the Turks succeeded in, was that no letter boxes could by placed at the public roads but only inside offices and buildings. In the Holy Land, the following countries had one or more Consulates:

a. Without their own postal service: England, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Persia, Prussia, Sardinia, Spain and the U.S.A..

b. With a postal service in one or more towns: Egypt, Germany, Italy, Austria, France and Russia.

Seal of the Vice-Consulate of France in Haifa used from 1855 until 1906   *Seal of the German Consulate in Haifa used from 1898 until 1918*

The following countries had a consular representative in Haifa:

a. Without their own post office: England, with a consul, from 1841; Prussia, with a consul, from 1845; USA, with a consular agent, from 1855; Germany, with a vice-consul, later with a consul, from 1898.*

b. With their own post office: Russia, with a consular agent, from 1841, and a postal service from 1859; Austria, with a vice-consul from 1855, and a postal service from 1862; France, with a vice-consul, later a consul, from 1855, and a postal service from 1906.

Only these last three will be the subject of our discussion.

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* The French writer Lamartine visited Haifa in 1833. He wrote that he met a consular agent of Sardinia, a mister Malagamba.

8. The Carmelites

During many centuries the Carmelite Monastery affected Haifa. It is situated
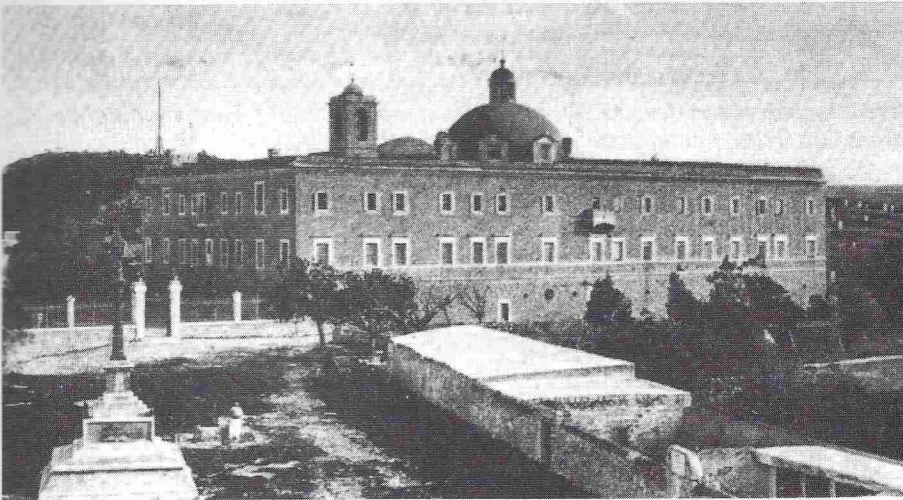
1906: The Carmelite monastery

high above the town on the Carmel Mountain.

In the year 326 Empress Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, founded a monastery dedicated to Eliah, near the spring of Eliah in Wadi Ein-es-Siah. For a few hundred years this monastery was a much loved pilgrim's goal like the Eliah cave not far from there.

Already in the Byzantine era, hermits, like the prophet Eliah, lived in the caves of this mountain to lead a life of isolation and worship. In the year 1209 Brocarius, who was then the abbot, received from Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, written rules for a Monastic Order which were confirmed in 1226 by Pope Honorius III.

From 1238 the monks of the Monastery, which was dedicated to Our Lady of the Carmel Mountain, started to extend their Order to Europe. In 1247 their rules were adapted to European circumstances by Pope Innocentius IV.

King Louis IX of France, the Saint, was stranded at the foot of the Carmel by a storm, during his Crusade in 1246. The monks offered him their hospitality. As a token of his gratitude he sent six enthusiastic young Carmelites from France to Haifa to rejuvenate the Mother Order. From this time the monastery was under French protection and extended the French influence on that part of the Carmel that is called 'French Carmel' till today. With the withdrawal of the Crusaders from the Holy Land in 1291 the monastery was abandoned, but Eliah's cave was honored also after this time and was constantly visited by pilgrims.

In Europe the Order grew steadily and divisions and monasteries came into existence in nearly all the countries, and in 1452 also for women. Teresia of Avila,
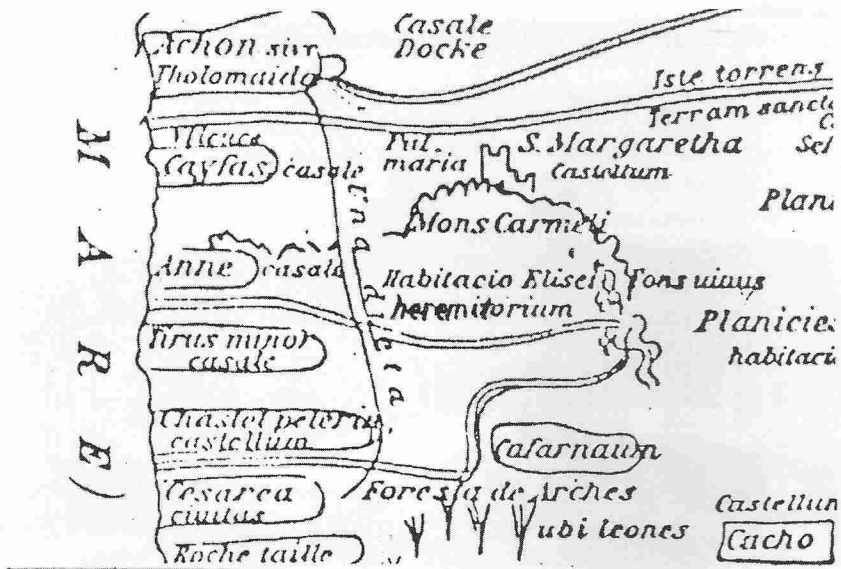
Map from the Middle Ages (appr. 1235) of the coast of the Holy Land with Cayfas, Mons Carmel and the Monastery of the Hermits of Eliah.

the Holy (1515 - 1582) did much for the reform of the rules of the Order and it is also because of her proposals that the independent Order of Barefooted Carmelites was born after her death in 1593 . This Order again practised the rules very strictly. Only in 1631 did Prosper de Saint-Esprit succeed in resettling the 'Barefooted Order' to their place of birth: the Carmel. With help from the French Consul in Aleppo he was granted the right to build a small monastery and cultivate a vegetable garden on the mountain.

Under the protection of the Emir of Haifa the Order could stay there in relative security, though the Greek Orthodoxs, who had a church in the area, resisted as much as they could. In about 1740, only 2 or 3 monks lived in the monastery, according to the travel report of Richard de Pockocke. In 1761 Dahir el-Umar razed the building. Some years later the Order was allowed to build a new monastery and it was transferred to the place were it stands today. The Carmelites used the opportunity to get rid of the Greek Orthodox Santa Margaretha church which was at that time in a neglected state.

In 1799 Napoleon, during the siege of Acre, sent his sick and wounded to the monastery on the Carmel. After the withdrawal of the French army, the Turks murdered the sick and chased the monks away. Later on, the dead were buried in the monastery's garden and a monument was erected on the grave.

In 1821, Abdallah of Acre again demolished the monastery, but in 1832 the Italian architect Cassini began the construction of a new building. The new church of the monastery was inaugurated in 1836 and is still in use as a church today. In

Letter from the Emir of Haifa to
Prosper de St. Esprit, from ca. 1631

Map of Haifa and surroundings with, among others, Cave of Eliah and
the Carmelite church (appr. 1740).

1839 the church received from Pope Gregor XVI the honourable title: 'Basilica Minora Stella Maris'. During the last quarter of the 19th century the Carmelites were involved in a great number of disputes with the German Templer Colonists who arrived in Haifa in 1868. Those strifes affected the life in the town for a long time. Their main reason was the ownership of pieces of land on the Carmel, and

about access roads. In the background lay the French-German conflict in Europe. The differences were in the end resolved to the benefit of the German Templer Colonist by Turkish Courts of law. The beautiful building of the 'Order on the Carmel' can be seen on many prints from the 18th and 19th century. The headquarter of the Order of Carmelites is now in Rome.

Interior of the Basilica on the Carmel Mountain

9. The Templer Colonists

The Templer Colonist movement originated about 1850 in Wuerttemberg (Germany). The protestant pastors Hardegg and Hoffmann developed ideas which went back to the 'pure' Christianity. Their goal was the furthering of the arrival of the Kingdom of God, by gathering His people in the Holy Land. They saw themselves and their followers as this people and as the purist of the religion.

In 1861 the movement achieved an official form and in 1867 the first twelve Templers came to the Holy Land, and settled in Nazareth, but because of sickness and religious animosity they could not maintain themselves. In 1868 a group of a few hundred Templers, better prepared and equipped, arrived in Haifa, where the pastors Hardegg and Hoffmann already had bought building land in advance.

The German Colonists, the majority of whom were farmers, started a new way of living with great zeal. They were very successful and after a few years they also settled in Sarona and Wilhelma, both near Jaffa. The largest group, however, stayed in Haifa and was known as the 'German Colony'. The Colonists brought progress to the town and were the first to bring a piece of Western Europe to Palestine.

They continued their efforts, against opposition from many directions, which lasted for a long time. Even in 1900 the Templers had to defend their houses against assaults from the Arab citizens and they suffered from bandits and attacks on their lands and vineyards.

*Illustrated postcard from Haifa, 1899, with view of the buildings of
the German Templer Colonists.*

The Templers were the first to build wagons in Haifa. They also built a road to
Nazareth, paid for by themselves, and started a diligence service to and from Acre
which shortened the journey from four hours to one hour. They introduced modern
agricultural methods in Palestine and proved that it was possible to make a living
from farming. They were an inspiration for the Zionists who came afterwards, and
maintained very good relations with them.

The German Templers kept and cherished their German nationality. Emperor
Wilhelm II was welcomed in Haifa on the 25th of October, 1898 with arches of
honour.

From the beginning the Colonists built a grid of roads to the west of the old
city. Here they constructed their schools, churches and houses which give us even
today a picture of the excellent way they arranged their lives. Next to their own

Ds. Hoffmann

Ds. Hardegg

The German Colony in Haifa, ca. 1900

hospital the Templars had their own Bank. They had their own coins and postmarks, but the latter not in Haifa.

At the end of the First World War the Templers were interned for a short period in Egypt by the British army, but in 1920 they returned to their Colonies.

After 1933 the Nazis tried to influence them with their theories, a thing that regrettably succeeded partially. During the Second World War most of them were

BANK DER TEMPELGESELLSCHAFT
(Bank of the Temple Society) Ltd.

HAIFA, P.O.B. 344
(PALESTINE)

Part of a cover of the Bank of the Temple Society in Haifa, sent on 13th May, 1937

interned by the British in Atlit, 700 were transported to Australia. Part of them was exchanged for Jewish prisoners from the concentration camps.

In 1945 the interns were freed, but they were made to understand they could better leave and only some of the very old stayed. The remainder went to Germany or Australia to their relatives. This was the end of that chapter, but in Haifa you can still enjoy the beautiful and well-built houses of the German Colony. Some of them still have religious texts written over their main entrance, like: "O Herr, Hilff" or "dein Reich komme".

Aus Sarona
bei Jaffa (Deutsche Post)

TEMPEL-KOLONIE
HAMIDIJE-
WILHELMA
DEUTSCHE POST
JAFFA

Handstamps used in the Templer Colonies
Sarona and Wilhelma

"Wohl denen die das Gebot halten und thun immerdar recht" (*Blessed be those who follow the precept and always do the righteousness*), *carved on a stone lintel of a house in the German Colony of Haifa.*

10. The Bahai Community

The panorama of Haifa is dominated by the big golden dome of the Bahai mausoleum. The Bahais form a religious community with many followers all over the world. The movement has as its goal service to humanity by working for world peace and universal brotherhood.
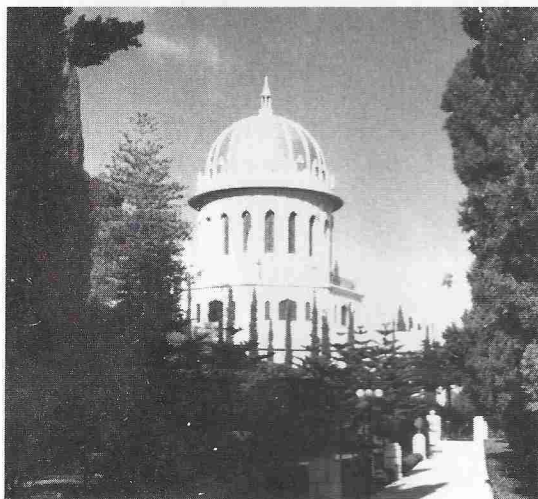
The Bahai dome in Haifa

The spiritual precursor of the Bahai was the Baab (the Gate), who preached these principles in Persia and was executed there by a fanatic clergy. His pupil and successor, Baha'u'llah was exiled from Persia and arrived in 1868 in Haifa, after much wandering, continuing to Acre. His followers offered him a villa with beautiful gardens. During his short stay in Haifa he had ordered the bringing of the body of Baab from Persia, to be buried on the Carmel mountain. This wish was only fulfilled in 1909. With this the foundation was laid for the connection of the Bahai to Haifa. Already at the end of the 19th century they succeeded in buying large tracts of land on the Carmel mountain. Baha'u'llah died in 1892 and was buried in Acre. His successor Abdul Baha started the construction of a spacious tomb on the Carmel. The Turks became very suspicious and put him in jail for 7 years. After his release he made several worldwide journeys visiting his followers, encouraging them and spreading the gospel. In 1913 he settled in Haifa definitly, and died there in 1921. A year before his death he was promoted to the nobility by the British. He was buried next to the Baab in the now finished tomb. The building of a center for meditation, which was also a mausoleum, commenced.

In 1953 the mausoleum was crowned with the impressive golden dome of which the gold colored roof-tiles were fabricated in the Netherlands. Already at the end of the 19th century a number of Bahai believers had settled in Haifa. They built
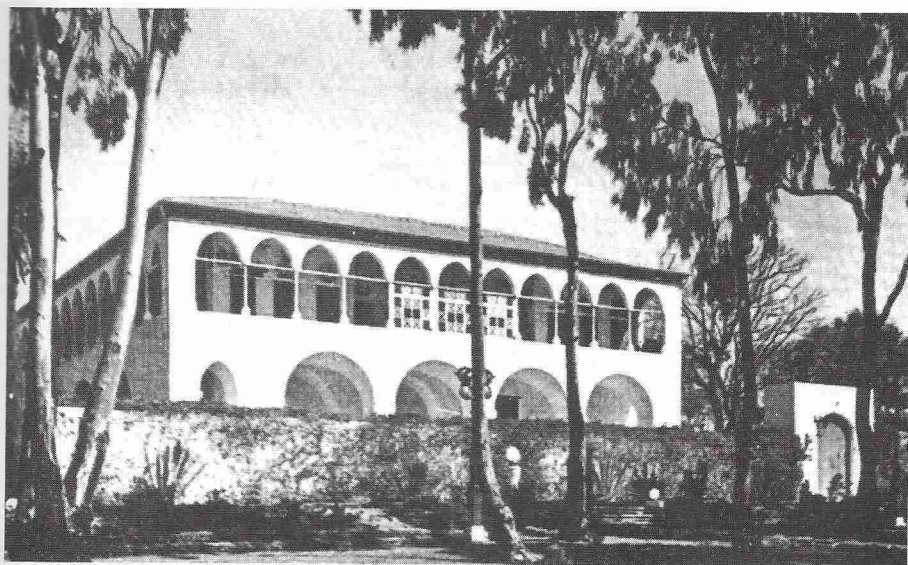
The Bahai Sanctuary near Acre.

beautiful houses next to the German Colony. Because most of them came from Persia, their quarter was called the Persian Quarter, with the Persian Square at its center which is so called till today.

BAHÁÍ WORLD CENTRE
POST OFFICE BOX 155•• 31 001 HAIFA, ISRAEL

Baha'i letterhead

After Abdul Baha, Shogri Effendi was appointed to be 'Defender of the Faith'. Already very early he foretold a great future for Haifa which today harbours the administrative and religious center of the movement. The Bahai Community always maintained excellent relations with the State of Israel and the township of Haifa.
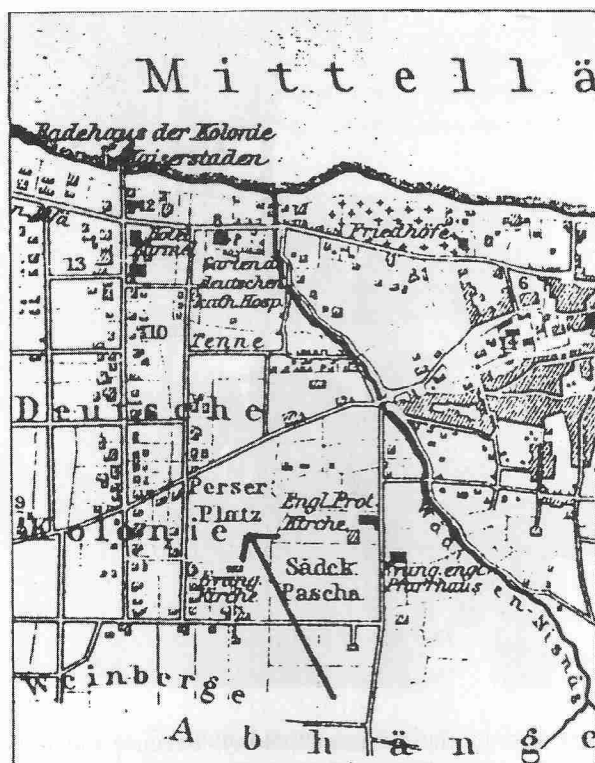
Map of Haifa from 1923 with an indication of the
'Perser Platz' (Persian Square)

11. The Era of the British Mandate: General

During the years 1918-1948 Haifa enjoyed an economic and cultural boom. The town grew from 20.000 to 150.000 inhabitants and vigorous activity was felt in every way of life. In 1920 the Israel Trade Union, the Histadrut, was founded in Haifa and in 1926 the Technion, the Haifa Technical Highschool, was officially inaugurated.

Cook's travel guide for Palestine from 1929 lists in Haifa, among others, four hotels, a four times-a-week train connection with Damascus, a daily train connection to and from Kantara and daily postal traffic to all of the important places in Palestine. From 1929 to 1933 the harbour shore at the seaside was expanded greatly by filling a section of sea with boulders. The added area was used to build warehouses and piers.

In 1931 Haifa already had 50.000 inhabitants. In the nineteen thirties a number of industries were founded, such as glass, textile, clothing, ceramics, metal and chemical factories. In 1934 an oil refinery and a pipe-line to Iraq were built.
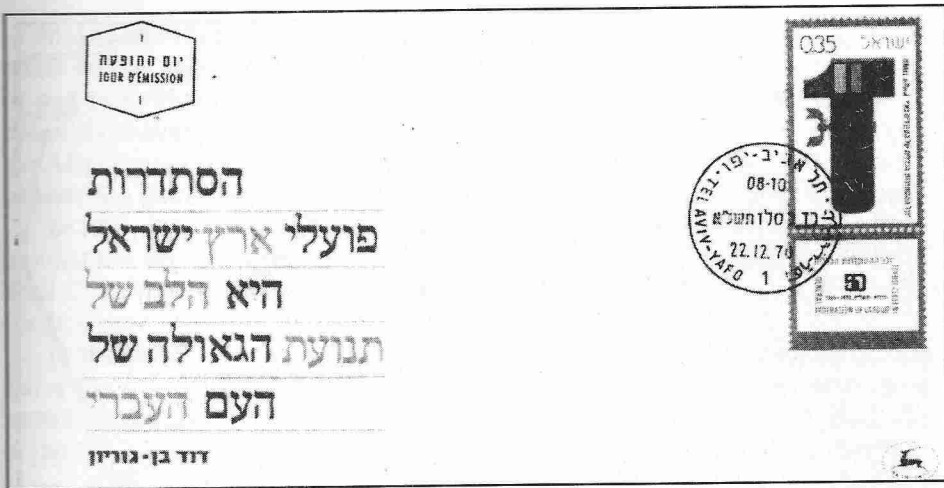
First Day Israeli Cover, December 22nd 1970, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Jewish Trade Union which was founded in Haifa in 1920.
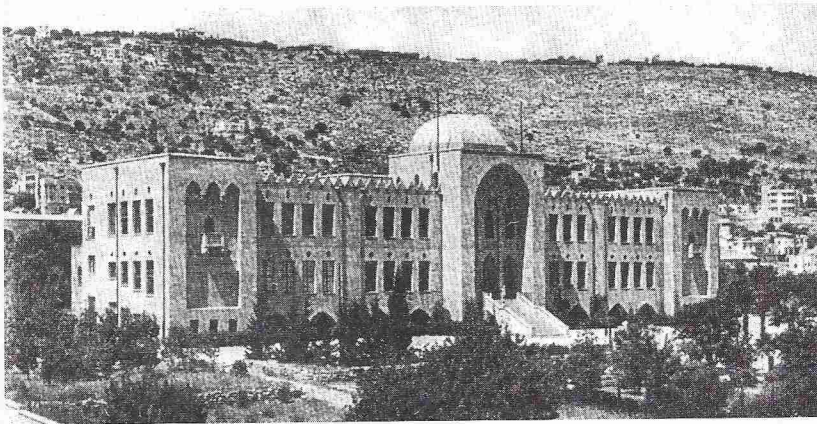
The Technion in Haifa, 1926

The town was already then divided into three different "zones":

a. Downtown with remnants of the old city and the harbour;

b. Hadar Hacarmel with the ruins of the castle from 1774 and living and commercial quarters halfway up the Carmel;

c. The upper city, called Central Carmel, with the Ahuzat Samuel quarter high on the mountain ridge. Ahuzat Samuel was called after the first British High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel; it was the new and more luxurious living quarter.
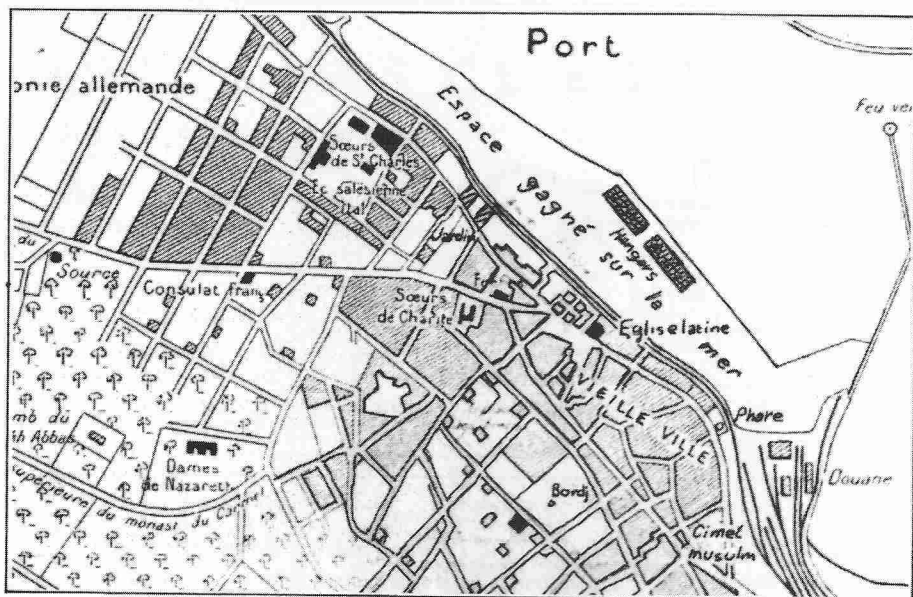
Map of Haifa with the expansion to the seaside indicated.

Letter from Beyrouth to Shell Company in Haifa, 1948

Meanwhile Haifa was enriched with a theater, museums, movie theaters and a music school. Many of these developments were influenced by the good traffic links to and from Haifa. We will dedicate a special chapter to these connections. The political developments were not so good. Even during the First World War, in 1915, the Allies launched a plan for the partition af the Holy Land whereby Haifa would be part of a British enclave, but the Balfour Declaration (1917) abolished this plan.

In 1921, 1929, 1933, 1936 and 1937 unrest erupted between the Arab and Jewish populations which cost many lives, the majority of which were Jewish. The British 'Peel Commission' advised in 1937 that by an eventual partition of the country Haifa should belong to the Jewish portion.

In the Second World War Haifa was a port of war. From the beginning of the war a blackout was ordered. Once there was even an air attack on Haifa and an Italian plane was shot down. With the capitulation of Italy in 1943 all Italian ships in the Eastern Mediterranean were ordered to sail to Haifa.

Letter from the Armon theater, Haifa

In June 1946 the British arrested a number of Jewish leaders and the Jewish quarter, Hadar, was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. Some weeks later a curfew was introduced. On 21st April 1948, the British started, unforeseen, to leave the town.

Members of the Hagana, the clandestine Jewish army, took quick action and on the 24th of April they took over the administration of Haifa. Of the 50,000 Arab inhabitants about 45,000 left the town, following the instructions of the Arab High Council. This was contrary to the request to stay, made by amongst others Haifa's Jewish mayor, Aba Khoushi.

On May 14 the British Administration cancelled all public services in Palestine and on the same day the Jewish State was proclaimed. However it took until June 30 for the last of the British troops to leave Palestine. In Haifa they boarded ships which took them to Cyprus. On the 1st of July 1948 the Israeli flag waved over the port of Haifa.

The Postal History

12. The Postal Links in the Holy Land before ca. 1850

From the beginning of history postal traffic existed in the Holy Land. Haifa hardly played a role in it untill the middle of the 19th century. We know that the Persians sent their letters by postal runner along existing roads, as did the Egyptians.

The Romans also had their centrally arranged postal traffic. After their conquests, they built roads wherever necessary so that they could transfer their legions quickly. These roads advanced traffic, commerce and also the postal services. The carriage of post in Roman times was the task of the Cursus Publicus, on horseback. In the era of the Emperors the service was extended to all parts of the Empire, first in Italy, later also to the provinces, like Judea. During the rule of emperor Hadrianus (2nd century) the Cursus Publicus started wearing feathers on their hats as a sign of great speed. A number of special decrees authorized the use of horses for the postal service. Emperor Honorius brought some budget savings in the 6th century by exchanging the horses with cheaper, but also slower, mules.

On the famous 'Tabula Peuteringiana', a simplified Roman map of the world, possibly from the 5th century, we find the travel and postal routes and the 'mansios' (rest stations) for the Cursus Publicus accurately indicated. In Palestine the mansios were: Acre, Ceasarea, Nablous, Bet Shean, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Jericho and Ashkalon.

Two other Roman maps mention Haifa as Sicaminum (Shiqmona). The 'Itineria Romana' mentions Sicaminum as a place between Acre and Ceasarea and
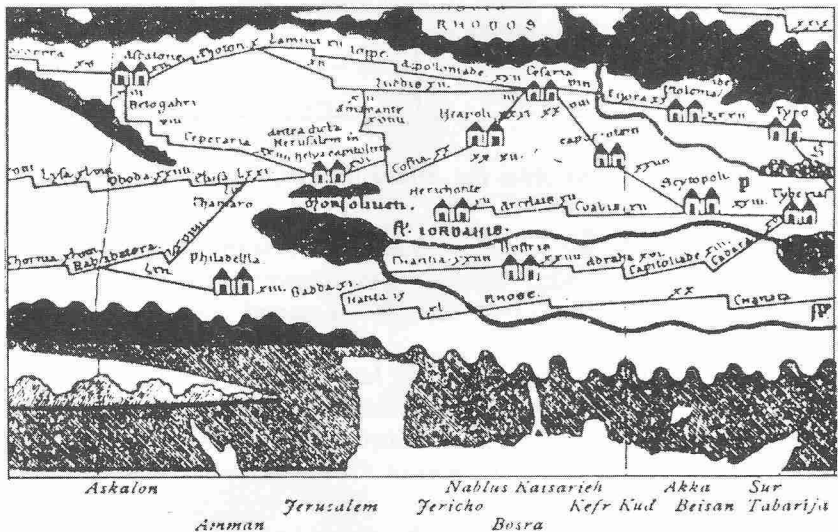
Fragment of the Tabula Peuteringia from the Roman era with the postal connections and the mansios (restplaces).

on the 'Hierosolimitica' map the Mansio Sicaminum is also shown at a distance of 3 miles from the Carmel Mountain.

The Byzantines called the head of their postal services Regendarius. The Mancipes were responsible for the maintenance of the roads in their region and Stationarii were responsible for their own mansios. Along the main roads milestones were erected which showed the distances. Several of these milestones were found also in Israel.

During the first Arab period, namely under the rule of the Abassids in the 9th and 10th centuries, the postal service reached a high degree of perfection. Many postal stations were in existence, 930 in all of the empire. There the postal riders could rest, change their horses and stay overnight. The Central Service of the Post, the 'Diwan-al-Basail' was located in Baghdad. It looked after the speedy and safe transport of all official documents. Private post sometimes could be taken along, but most of it was sent with travelling salesmen or by special messengers.

The Khalif Harun-al-Rashid, 766 - 809, arranged new postal routes and improved existing ones, which made speedy connections possible from the capital Baghdad throughout the empire, including to Palestine. In Baghdad we also find the beautiful maps and route descriptions the messengers had to use. The task of the postmasters was not only the maintenance of good connections, but also the reporting to Baghdad of everything of importance which had happened in their region.

The Arab writer Mokadashi, born in Jerusalem in 946, recorded a journey he had made in the year 985 through Syria and Palestine. He indicated the distances between places in "day's marches" and in postal ranges of about 12 km, e.g." between Ramla (then the capital of Palestine), Nablus, Acre, Gaza and Jerusalem. In Palestine one "day's march" consisted of 3 'posts' of 6.33 miles each. A mile was 1,800 meters, so a "day's march" was 3 x 6.33 x 1.8 km = 34 km. The 'posts' and routes in Palestine as mentioned on the maps by the Arab mapmakers Choradbe, Quodama and Ishtaqri are indicated, simplyfied, on the subsequent map. We find Haifa on the 1154 map of the world by Idris as a town and 'mansio' between Acre and Ceasarea.
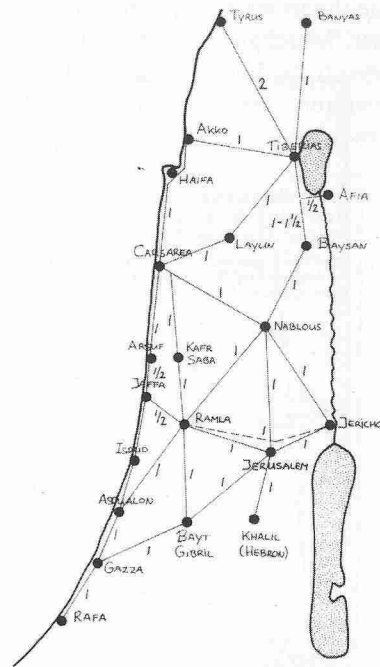
Distance in "day's marches" according to Arab travel records from the 9th century.
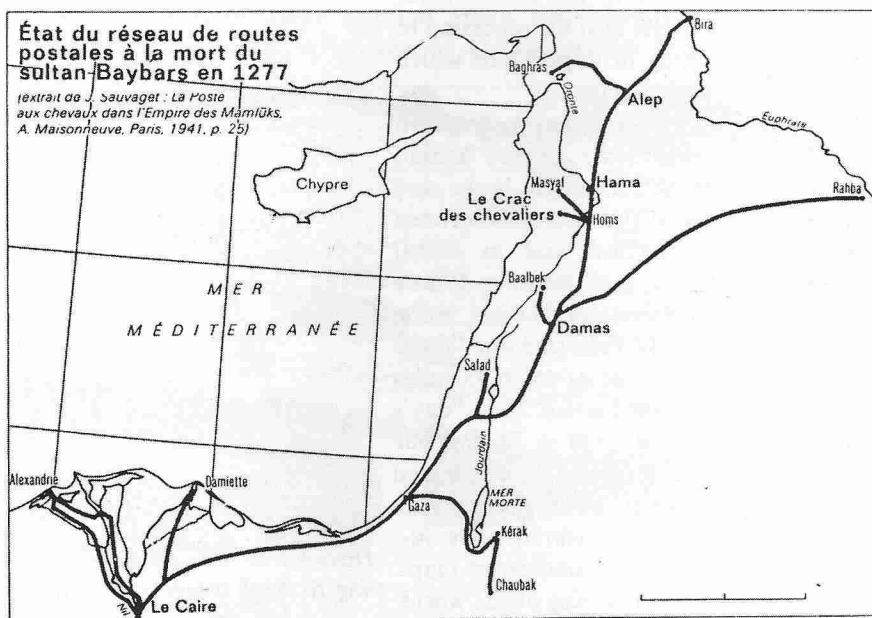
Of special interest is the first 'air-mail', the pigeon-post, which was organized by the Abassids between Alexandria and Baghdad, via Palestine. By means of a string

of pigeon keepers, the pigeons were transported to the next post, and so, important messages could be sent in great speed over large distances.

In the 'Geniza', a store for old manuscripts in the Cairo synagogue, letters were found from Jewish merchants from Tyrus, Damascus and Ramla. It shows the existence of intensive postal connections with the Holy Land. Letters were sent with leaders of caravans, ships' captains, special couriers and even donkey drivers. Often a letter closed with the notice that a trustworthy person was chosen for the transfer. From the Crusader era we find some letters written in Latin in the most important museums and libraries of the world. They were sent by boat via Constantinople and Venice. As far as we know, no letters from Caiaphas (Haifa) were found from this era.

Under the Mameluk rule, in the 13th and 14th century, an extensive horse post existed, including from Cairo via Gaza and Jerusalem to Damascus whereby Safed was served too.

Until the Turkish era most postal items were of a religious nature. From the Carmelite Monastery above Haifa we find letters in the 'Teresianum' in Rome. As a rule the monasteries used travelling monks and pilgrims for the forwarding of their post. Merchants and officials used couriers and the fortnightly boat service from Beyruth to Venice or any other ship that happened to sail from their hometown. Overland there were the roads from Haifa to Jaffa and Acre. These roads were however in a bad state, in winter often not usable and also dangerous.

Postal routes of Sultan Baybars in 1277. Carried on horseback throughout the Mammeluk Empire.

In the beginning the Sultan in Constantinople used Tartars by preference as post riders which is the reason that later all post riders in his territories were called 'Tartars'. They were entitled, in case of the fatigue of their horses, to stop the first rider they met and to aequire his horse in the name of the Sultan, which was of course not always met with appreciation.

In 1826 Constantinople announced for the first time a real itinerary for postal riders. They accepted only official post items. Only in about 1840 do we see the beginning of an organized postal service for common use in the Holy Land.

13. The Turkish Postal Service

In October, 1840 the Turks in Constantinople organized a postal service, with itinerary, for common postal traffic. During the initial years the post for Palestine was transferred via Beyruth where the outgoing items were also stamped. From 1841 to 1846 a regular courier and postal service existed from Jerusalem via Haifa and Acre to Beyruth. This service was, like most Turkish postal routes, rented out to the highest bidder, and in 1846 it came into the hands of two Italian merchants. In 1852 Haifa was added as an official stop on this route.

Map of Haifa from the travel guide 'Durchs Heilige Land' (Through the Holy Land), 1913. Marked as 15 is the Turkish Post office.

The number of people able to read and write was rather small at that time in Palestine. The Arabic part of the inhabitants was practically totally unalphabetic. In 1868 Turkey opened the first post offices in Palestine, one of them in Haifa. In 1876 the first Telegraph offices were also put into use. In the period from 1868 to 1918 the Turks had one or more post offices in about 40 villages and towns.

They fought an ongoing battle against the foreign post offices. All over the Turkish Empire, the Sultan lost yearly 500,000 pounds in postal revenue. Strong measures were announced to force Turkish subjects to use the Turkish postal service only. The competition was very fierce, so the Turks started in 1905 to supply institutes and companies with stamps with a rebate of 20 percent. These stamps bore the Arabic overprint B (from Behie: rebate).

The earliest known Turkish datestamp from Haifa dates from 1871. 21 different Turkish postmarks are known from Haifa including four telegraph postmarks, three railway postmarks and the postmark Zammarin/ Caiffa (Zichron Yacob). On maps of the town from the years 1890 - 1915 the Turkish Post and Telegraph office are marked in the old city. From 1906 the French post office was located in the same building.

Turkish stamps with overprints "B" for "Behie" (rebate).

Letters and postcards with a Turkish postmark 'Haifa' are usually not scarce, but still harder to find than e.g., Jerusalem and Jaffa. Extensive data about the Turkish postal service can be found in the publications of W. Pollack and A. Steichele.

At the end of 1914 the Turks opened a sub-office in Haifa at the Rue des Consuls, in the German Colony because all foreign post offices were closed on October 1st as a result of the beginning of the First World War.
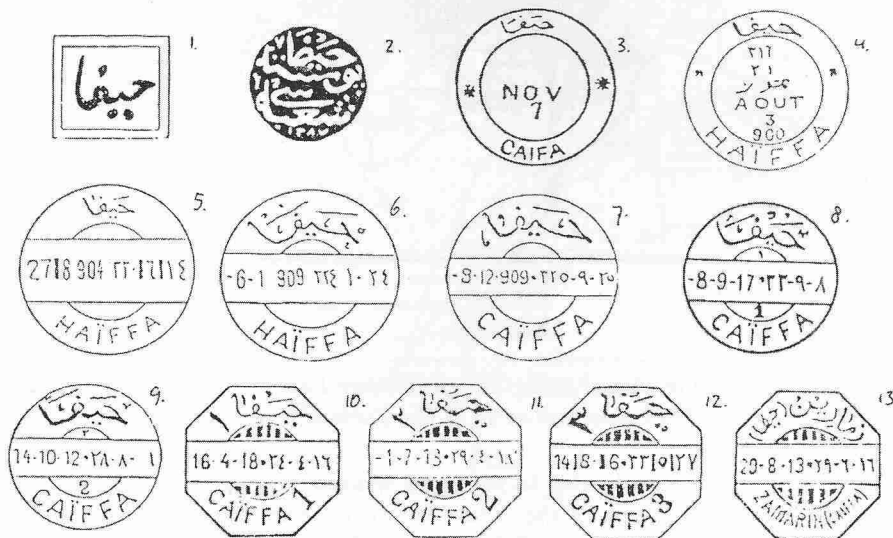
The Turkish postmarks of Haifa. (No. 11 is a reconstruction)

The Turkish telegraph postmarks of Haifa.

The handstamp of Rue des Consuls post office.

The postal tariff was*:

1. Till 1874: Printed matter:

up to 5 dirham, per 4-hours-journey –	1 para
5-10 dirham, per 4-hours-journey –	2 para
any extra dirham and/or hour-journey –	1 para

Letters:

up to 3 dirham, per hour-journey –	1 para
3-4 dirham, per hour-journey –	1 1/2 para
4-5 dirham, per hour-journey –	2 para
etc.	

2. From 1874-1918:

Inland: Printed matter per 50 grams –	5 para
Postcards –	10 para
Letters, Small parcels, per 20 grams –	20 para
Registerings –	40 para
Abroad: Printed matter per 50 grams –	10 para
Postcards:	20 para
Letters, Parcels etc., per 20 grams –	40 para

In Palestine the following coinage was in use or was used as face value of postage stamps:

1 piaster : 40 para (in all postal services)
1 franc : 100 centimes (German, French, Austrian postal services)
1 florin : 100 soldi (Austrian postal service: Lombardy, Venice)
1 rubel : 100 kopecks (Russian postal service).

The rate of exchange was approximately: 40 para = 30 soldi = 20 centimes = 10 kopecks. Because of changes in the exchange rates we see different frankings from 1908 onward. In principle the Turkish post office in Haifa used all the normally available Palestine stamps.

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* 1 dirham is about 1 gram; 1 hour-journey is about 30 km.

14. The Russian Postal Service

In 1856 the Russian 'Obshtchestwo Parschodstwa i Torgewli', (abbr. ROPiT, the Russian Steamship and Commerce Company) was founded in Odessa. At about 1859 the ROPiT opened an office in Haifa. In the meanwhile the company signed an agreement with the Russian government which gave it the privilege to transport postal items between its offices, thereby receiving a payment of 25% of the franking worth. On May 1st, 1868 the Russian government took over the postal service and started managing the various postal offices which were opened at the same time. It did so via its Consular representatives.

The handstamp of ROPiT, Haifa.

The Russians had their own post-tariff:

Printed matter	1 kopeck
Postcards	5 kopecks
Letters, per 20 grams	10 kopecks

In 1876 the tariff for letters changed to 8 kopecks and in 1879 to 7 kopecks.

From 1890 letters could be sent to all countries. In 1900 the Turkish coinage: paras and piasters, was adopted. Russian postal items from Haifa are scarce, especially those from 1900 and earlier. It is even suggested that the Russian post office in Haifa had been closed for a number of years from about 1875 to 1900, because no letters or stamps of this office are known from these years.

The Russian Consular Office was located east of the old town and not near the other consular establishments. It is likely that the ROPiT office and the post office were located in the same building.

Over the years the Russians used three different cancellations in Haifa. In addition, we know of Russian post offices in the Holy Land in Jerusalem, Jaffa and, unique in its kind, Acre. Starting in 1863 a special Levant stamp exists, from 1865 the ROPiT stamps were in use and from 1900 Russian stamps with surcharge in paras and piasters.

In 1909 Russian sets with place-name overprints were issued for the Russian post offices in the Levant (among them Jaffa and Jerusalem) and in 1910 again stamps with surcharge only. ROPiT overprints of a later date were not used in Palestine.

The Russian interests in the Holy Land were always important because thousands of Russian pilgrims set out yearly to visit the Holy Places, except,
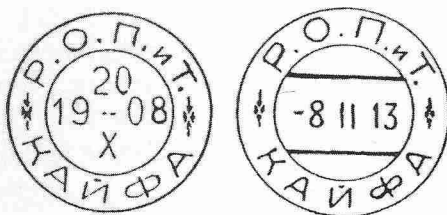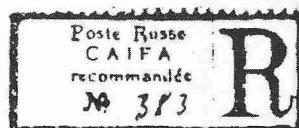

Two circular datestamps from the Russian Post in Haifa
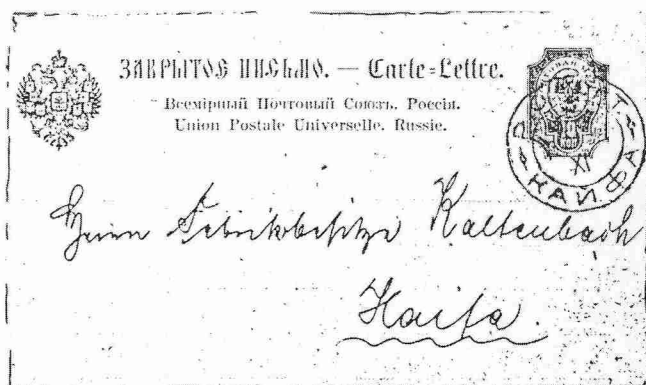
Russian Letter sheet used in Haifa.

of course during the Russian-Turkish War (1877-1878). The Russian office in Haifa closed down on October 1, 1914, like all other foreign post offices in the Turkish Empire, a short time before Turkey was involved, on the German side in the First World War.

Registered mail label of the Russian post in Haifa, with a handwritten registration number.

15. The French Postal Service

Though there were special relations between France, the Carmelites and the Holy Land, it was only in 1906 that France opened a post office in Haifa. From 1852 the French shipping company 'Messageries Maritimes', (previously called 'Messageries Nationales'), maintained a service to the ports of Haifa, Acre and Jaffa. The French postal service in the Holy Land never reached a significant importance. Besides the post office in Haifa the French had offices in Jerusalem and Jaffa.

The earliest known French cancellation in Haifa is from April 2, 1906. The office was then located together with that of 'Messsageries Maritimes' in the building of the Turkish Postal and Telegraph service in Haifa. Only one type of cancellation 'Caiffa-Syrie' is known and this in two forms: one with a large space and the second with a shorter space between the characters I and F in Caiffa.

Haifa French post cancellations, with big or small distance between characters.

In the beginning the French postal service used French stamps with an overprint in paras and piasters, but from 1902 a special issue was used with the 'territory' name 'Levant' (see Back Cover illustration). We find only these stamps used in Haifa by the French Post Office. Like all the other foreign post offices the French office in Haifa was closed on October 1st 1914.

16. The Austrian Postal Service

The Austrian postal service in the Holy Land was organized exceptionally well and was very popular.
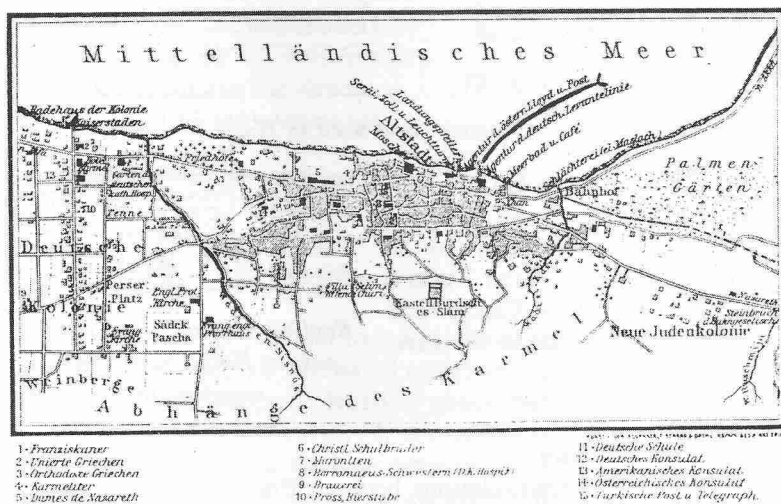
Map of Haifa from a travel guide of 1913 with, among others, the location of the Austrian post office.

The shipping company 'Austrian Lloyd', founded on September 3, 1835 in Trieste, received a contract in 1837 from the authorities to carry post. In 1845 the company started its Palestine route which later also had a stop in Haifa.

A second company the 'Austrian Donau Company' had, from 1841, a three-weekly service to the eastern part of the Mediterranean, reaching Jaffa and Beyrouth. Austrian post offices were located in Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa. The service was used widely for inland and international postal traffic, especially by the Jewish settlements. The Austrian post office in Haifa was opened in 1862. During its
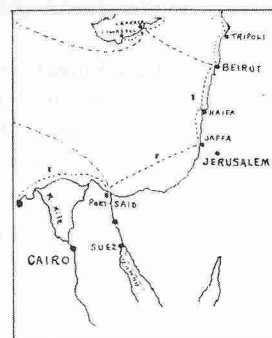
*Route-map of 'Austrian-Lloyd' in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, ca. 1870.*

lifetime eight different types of postmarks were in use.

From 1875 to ca. 1890 a one-line ship handstamp was used reading COL VAP DA (abbreviation of 'col vapore da', meaning: 'per steamboat from') followed by the placename or the cancellation. From the first period we know only of stampless letters. From 1863 stamps with the value indicated in soldi were used amongst other stamps from Lombardy-Venice. In 1867 Austrian stamps arrived with overprints in paras or piasters.
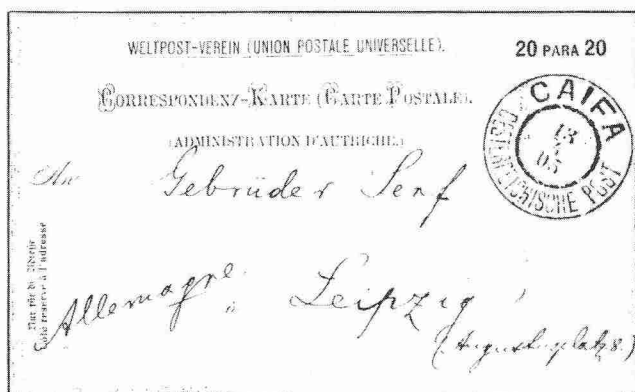
Stamps from the Austrian postal
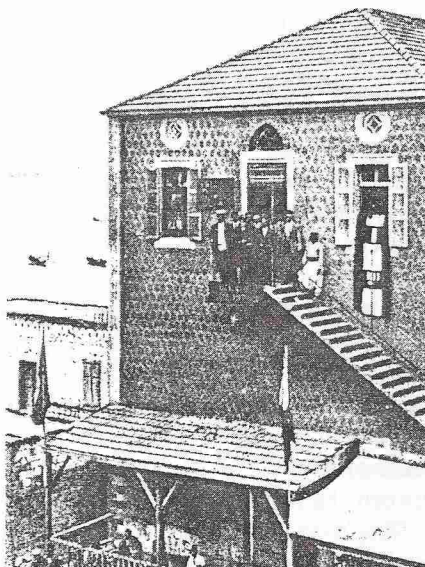
The Austrian post office in Haifa, ca. 1910
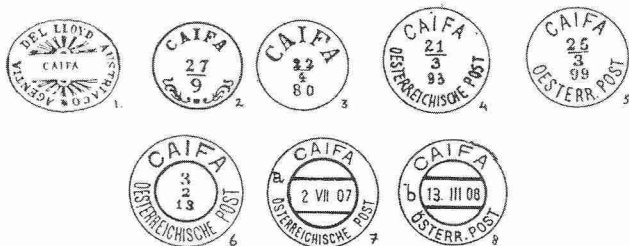
The eight types of Haifa Austrian postmarks

Austrian Levant postcard with overprint in PARA and Haifa cancellation No. 6 from 13-4-1950

service in Crete, with value overprints in centimes or francs, were also used in Palestine. The name of the town was always spelled: 'CAIFA'. The post office was located near the harbour in the building of the 'Austrian Lloyd' company. This 'Austrian Lloyd' was, until the eighties of the 19th century, the only company which included Haifa in its itineraries.

At about 1910 a private postal 'agency' was founded in Nazareth which transferred its post to the Austrian post office.
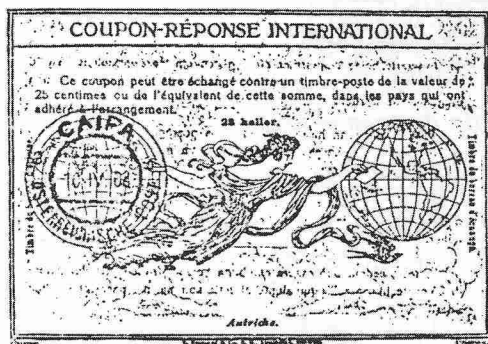
In the Jewish settlement of Zichron-Yacob (Zammarin) an important wine industry developed, stimulated by the French Baron de Rothschild. These wine cellars used the trademark 'Carmel Oriental' (See letter on cover page). The company always used the Austrian postal service which had even a special 'letter-book' for 'Carmel Oriental' in Haifa. The postal connection between the two places was twice weekly.

Nazareth postal mark on Austrian mail

The roads in Palestine were not very safe, even in the beginning of the 20th century. The daily newspaper 'Ha Or' of March 31, 1912, reports that the post-diligence of the Austrian Post had been attacked at Mikve Israel near Jaffa, by Maroccan bandits. The driver was killed.
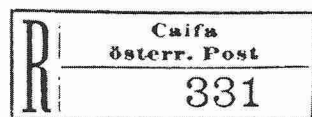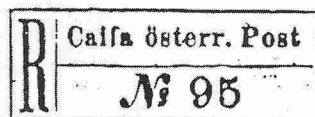
From 1908 we know about bisected stamps on postcards, cancelled with Austrian cancellation 'Haifa'. They were bought and posted etc. by a certain Mr. Bolthausen, a tour-guide from Solingen, Germany. These postcards are a pure

Austrian Reply Coupon used in Haifa on April 10, 1908.

Haifa Austrian Registration labels with one and two line text

philatelic fabrication. The normal Austrian Reply Coupons of 28 Heller were also used in Haifa.

Registration labels existed with the text on one or two lines. All Austrian post offices were closed on October 1st, 1914.

17. World War I

A short time before Turkey was involved on the German and Central European side in the First World War, all foreign post offices in the Ottoman Empire were forced to close their doors. The state of war exerted great pressure on the Palestine economy and the standard of living deteriorated quickly, because all imports from overseas were cut off. In a few years the Turkish paper money was practically worthless, the prices of wheat and other food products rose enormously, so a large part of the inhabitants of the towns were hungry.

Compared to Jerusalem and Jaffa, in Haifa the situation was, somewhat less critical because of its nearness to the plain of Jizreel where a great deal of wheat was produced. The Turkish postal service was the only one functioning in Haifa in the years 1914 - 1918. Two offices were operating: one in the old city and one in the Rue des Consuls in the German Colony. Next to these, a number of field post offices (Army Post) were used, mostly temporarily.

The post to and from abroad was examined by a censor. Haifa had a censor's office with its own Turkish censor stamp, used only in Haifa. Palestine harboured in addition to the Turkish army units, also units from Germany and Austria, totalling in 1918 more than 20,000 soldiers. These army units were part of the 'Zentrale Heeresgruppe Ost' (Central Army Group East), under the command of General Liman von Sanders. In the summer of 1916, the German reinforcements were sent with the Turkish army to the Sinai desert, under the name of 'Reserve Corps Pascha I', to repulse the threat of a British offensive from Egypt. At the end of 1917 the Turkish, German and Austrian troops were reorganized and united to form the Army-Group 'Jildirim', Arabic for Falcon, under the command of General von Falkenhaijn.

Turkish Censor's stamp used in Haifa 1917 - 1918

The Turkish 27th Division was stationed in Haifa during the first years of the War. It used Field Post Office No. 27. We also know the double-bridge three-star cancellation 'Deutsche Feldpost Nr. 365' used in Haifa from January 4 to August 7, 1918, Nr. 372 (in January 1918) and Nr.663 (in February, 1918). The 'Armee Ober Kommando' (Army High Command), with the datestamp AOK4, was stationed in Haifa in April 1918. Of the Austrian Units, the K.u.K. 24cm Moerser Batterie (Royal and Imperial 24cm Mortar Battery) under Oberst (Lt. Colonel) Von Krebst had its Field Post Office in Haifa from December 1917 until April 1918.

Circular date stamp from Field Post Office Nr. 27, used in Haifa, 1914-1915 (reconstruction G.C.)

The Palestinian campaign went badly for the Turks and their allies. The British troops under General Allenby, advancing from Egypt, chased them out of Sinai in the autumn of 1917 (known as the E.E.F. = "Egyptian

Three star type German fieldpost date stamp,
and 'Registered' label 365, used in
Haifa, 1918

German fieldpost datestamp
A.O..K.4, used temporarily
in Haifa.

Expeditionary Force"). On October 9, 1917 they conquered Jerusalem, but after this conquest their advance slowed down for a while. In the summer of 1918 they renewed their offensive and on September 23, Haifa was taken by the allies after heavy fighting. In the official report of the E.E.F. campaign, we read: *"The road from Afula to Haifa leads along the the Northeastern side of the Carmel Ridge. At about two miles before it reaches Haifa, the road is pressed in between a foothill of the Carmel at left and the marshy mouth of the Kishon River at the other side.*

As the 5th Cavalry Division reached this point at the 23rd of September they came under fire from the slopes of the Carmel and the road and river cossings were defended by a great number of machine gun posts. While the Mysore Lancers cleaned the mountain slopes, the Jodhpur Lancers executed a frontal attack over the road. They galloped into the town stabbing several Turkish soldiers on their way".
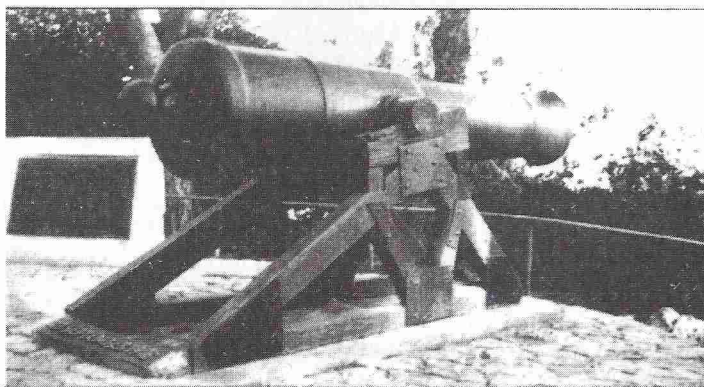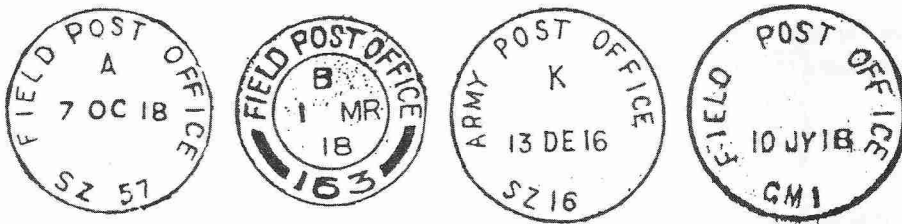

Cannon on the Carmel in memory of the capture of Haifa by
the British Force, September 23, 1918.

Thus, four centuries of Turkish rule came to an end for Haifa and the British Mandate Period started. On the Carmel a cannon is still standing reminding us of this operation.

## 18. The Mandate Era Postal Service.

A few days after the conquest of Haifa, on September 27, 1918, the E.E.F.

Some of British fieldpost cancellations used in Haifa 1918-1919.

opened its first Army Post Office there, APO SZ 57. We also know about the following circular date stamps of the E.E.F. from Haifa: H 20 (from October 29, 1918), H 21 (from September 28, 1918), FPO 161, 162 and 163 (from 1918), APO SZ16 (1919), D 54 and GMI (October 1918 - April 1919).

The other allies also had military units in Palestine. The Italians had a
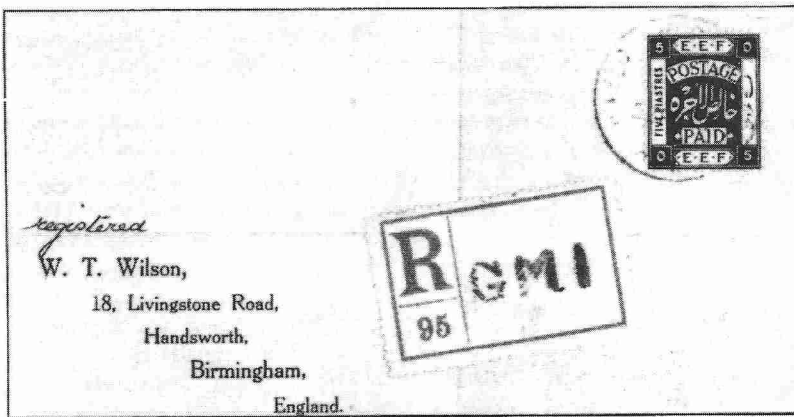
Registered letter GM 1, from Haifa, February 22, 1919

contingent which however was not stationed in Haifa. A French infantry detachment that arrived in Haifa on the 8th of October, 1918 and the Indian troops, which played so important a role in the conquest of the town, used Haifa Field Post Office No. 328 and 383.

The civilians had to use the Military Post Offices in this first period, not always without problems. After much begging, the first civil post office in Haifa was
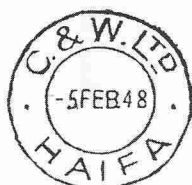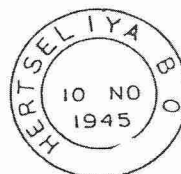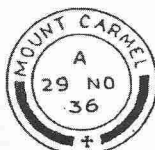
Indian fieldpost cancellations used in Haifa, 1918/1919

*Some of the OETA cancel-
lations used in Haifa, 1919 -
1920*

opened on December 15, 1918, in the building of the Main Post Office. The British
Military Administration put to use their own E.E.F. stamps, the stamps which
would be issued later in many variations with the overprint in three languages
'Palestine'.

A number of Mandate era cancellations as used in Haifa from 1920 - 1948

After the fieldpost cancellations we see those of the OETA-E.E.F. (OETA = Occupied Enemy Territories Administration). These stayed in use until the summer of 1920. In August of that year the first cancellations of the Civil Administration were introduced. As expected, during the interim period between Military and OETA cancellations and from OETA to Civil Administration cancellations, both types overlapped timewise. All in all, at least 130 different Mandate cancellations of Haifa are known, including about 25 of the Military and OETA period.
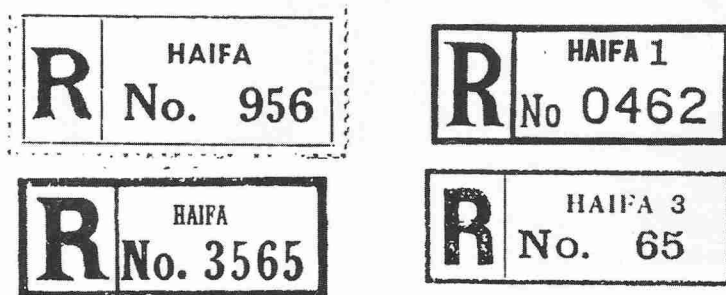
A few 'Registered' labels from Haifa's Mandate period

In those years 19 different 'Registered' labels appeared for Haifa: Haifa, Haifa 1 - Haifa 17 (for companies, banks etc.) and Ahuzat Samuel.

At the same time 6 parcel labels were issued: Haifa, and Haifa 1 - Haifa 5 for the different post offices.

A number of Mandate cancellations and their first day of use (*) illustrates the growth and the development of the town, as we see in the following list:

* 1. Main post office, Kingsway, today ha'Atsmaut road	7 Jan '20
* 2. Carmel Avenue, German Colony, corner Allenby/ Ben Gurion	1 Feb '24
* 3. Hadar Hacarmel, now near Orah Cinema (many changes of location)	1 Dec '26
* 4. Mount Carmel, Merkaz (Centre) (many changes of location)	3 Dec '28
* 5. Bazar	7 Jan '29
5a. Moved to Nazareth Street 23	19 Jan '38
5b. Moved to Hidjaz Street	29 Mar '41
* 6. Ahuzat Samuel, corner Moria/Litani Road	18 Nov '35
* 7. Bat Galim, among others at Spinneys Ltd.	22 Jul '39
* 8. Herzeliya Street	5 Jun '45

It is as if one could see the town 'climb' the Mount Carmel.

During the Arab troubles of 1936-37, more troops were stationed in Haifa. They used the 5th Division FPO 25, from October 1, 1936 to January 10, 1937.

Imperial Reply Coupon 12 mils with "Haifa Hadar Hacarmel B.O. 19 FE 42"

Field Post Office 25, used in Haifa 1936/1937.

Of course many military units were stationed in Haifa during the Second World War. We will devote a special chapter to this period. From 1939 until the end of their stay in Palestine in 1948, the British Army in Haifa used the Field Post Office 731 (until June 5, 1948) and FPO 28 (until June 29, 1948).

Field Post Office 731, used in Haifa until the departure of the British Army from Palestine.

From the beginning of May 1948 all registered military post, together with the Fleet mail, went through the 'Fleet Mail Office', FMO 12, in Haifa, the post office of the Headquarters of the Levant Area of the British Navy. The non-registered army mail was taken care of by FPO 28. This FPO was transferred from the south of Palestine to Haifa at the end of February,1948 and stayed active there till the end of June, 1948.

Together with Circular Date Stamps we see in the Haifa Mandate Period the

following datestamps: Oval 'Registered' handstamps, triangular handstamps, machine and slogan cancellation.

Telegram form of Cable & Wireless Ltd. with datestamp Haifa, November 2, 1940.

In April 1948 , the English closed down all the post offices in Palestine without transferring anything to the Jewish authorities. The Mandate ended on the 15th of May and the State of Israel was proclaimed. As transition we have first the 'Interim Period' which was so interesting for Haifa, and will be discussed later on. Postal tariffs are discussed in the addendum.

19. Authorized, Semi-Authorized And Other Handstamps (Cachets)

From Haifa we know of about 100 authorized, semi-authorized and other handstamps. Some are from the Turkish period but most are from the Mandate.
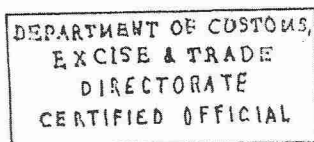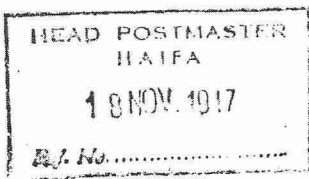
Different cachets used in Haifa during the Mandate period.

Some hotels, big companies and travel agencies generally used mostly oval handstamps, even before the First World War. They are found on incoming, outgoing and transit post. It happened that firms like, for example, Thomas Cook & Son acted as 'forwarding agent'. We also know of handstamps used by the Police, the Harbour Master, the Customs Service, the Governor of the town, the Navy office, the Railway and of course the Postal Authority. These handstamps were nearly always in black ink, infrequently in violet ink.

20. The Communication To And From Haifa

It should be clear that the rapid growth of Haifa was influenced enormously by its having a good harbour and good links with its hinterland. The growth of Haifa, in turn, stimulated very much the birth of a number of new connections.

We will discuss the postal links of Haifa via the four following groups:
a. The Maritime links
b. The Railway links
c. Links by Road
d. The Air Links

a. <u>The Maritime Links</u>

In previous chapters we already have given an explanation why, from 1850 on, a growing number of European shipping companies used Haifa as their main harbour in the region.

1. Fahrten des österreichischen Lloyd.

Linie Alexandrien — Haifa — Beirût (alle 14 Tage).

Alexandrien			Freitag	9	Vorm.
Port Sa'îd	Samstag	5 Vorm.	Sonntag	12	Mittag
Yâfa	Montag	4½ Vorm.	Montag	12	Mittag
Haifa	Montag	7½ Nachm.	Montag	12	Nacht
Beirût	Dinstag	9½ Vorm.	Mittwoch	7	Vorm.
Haifa	Mittwoch	4½ Nachm.	Mittwoch	11	Nachm.
Yâfa	Donnerstag	6½ Vorm.	Donnerstag	4	Nachm.
Port Sa'îd	Freitag	8½ Vorm.	Samstag	10	Vorm.
Alexandrien	Sonntag	6	Vorm.		

Preise der Fahrten 1. und 2. Classe, in österreichischen Gulden (Silberwährung; engl. Pfund = 10 fl. 15; 20 Franken Gold = 8 fl. 5; turk. Pfund = 9 fl.; russ. Silberrubel = 1 fl. 50 kr.):

Von	Classe	Nach											
		Alexandrien	Beirût	Brindisi	Haifa	Corfù	Constantinopel	Yâfa	Piraeus	Port Sa'îd	Syra	Smyrna	Triest
Alexandrien	1	—	55	91	46	81	98	37	95	20	83	62	132
	2	—	40	68	33	60	72	27	69	14	61	46	92
Beirût	1	56	—	157	10	140	110	18	107	35	95	76	187
	2	41	—	115	7	103	81	13	78	25	71	57	134
Constantinopel	1	98	112	101	125	81	—	131	48	121	38	32	133
	2	72	82	73	91	55	—	95	34	89	27	23	96
Haifa	1	45	9.20	135	—	126	121	6.20	119	25	106	86	173
	2	33	6.80	99	—	93	87	4.70	87	18	77	61	123
Port Sa'îd	1	20	32	111	24	101	120	16	118	—	104	82	148
	2	14	23	82	18	73	87	11.60	85	—	75	60	105
Smyrna	1	62	75	83	89	63	33	94	31	88	18	—	115
	2	46	57	59	65	44	24	69	22	64	12	—	83
Triest	1	132	182	46	174	51	132	164	108	149	96	113	—
	2	91.35	130	33	123	39	95	117	79	105	69	82	—
Yâfa	1	39	18	131	9	120	128	—	126	18	113	93	166
	2	28	12	96	6.50	88	93	—	92	13	82	69	118

Table from the Baedeker travel guide of 1883, with itinerary of the Austrian Lloyd via Haifa.

About 1895 the 'Deutsche Levant Linie' and later the Italian 'Lloyd Palestino', with a weekly service from Brindisi to Haifa, began stopping at Haifa. From the harbour registration book we learn that about 1900 also British, Greek, Dutch, American and Egyptian ships entered Haifa regularly. In 1908 you could sometimes count ten steamships at once in the harbour. In 1910, 1,314 ships entered Haifa with a total tonnage of 780,000 tons and in 1930 it grew to 2504 ships and total tonnage of 5,322,000. Before the First World War Haifa was also a service harbour of the German Mediterranean Fleet.

Towards the end of the nineteen twenties, sea mail for Western Europe left Haifa according to the following schedule:
1. On Sundays, with the 'P & O. Line' Via Port Said and Marseille;
2. On Wednesdays, with the 'Servizio Maritimi' steamer via Alexandria, Napoli and Genova;
3. On Fridays, with 'Lloyd Triestino' via Alexandria, Brindisi and Trieste.

In the nineteen thirties a handstamp 'Paquebot' was used in Haifa for incoming post, known in black and violet.

"Paquebot" handstamp, used in Haifa, 1931 - 1935

$$\boxed{\textbf{PAQUEBOT}}$$

b. The Railway Links.

In 1906 Haifa received its long awaited railway connection, via Dera'a, with the Damascus-Hidjaz railway. This railway also carried post, of course. The line Haifa-Acre was erected in 1912, on the route Haifa - Damascus a traveling post office operated from then. We know of quite a few Damas-Caiffa cds, and from 1914 also a Nablous-Caiffa cds.


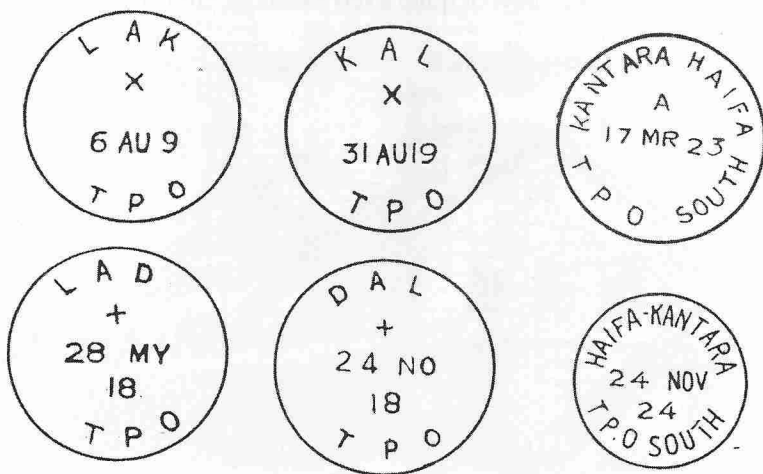*The main railway station of Haifa, ca. 1910.*

In the Mandate period a number of different cancellations were used, for example Damas-Caiffa, Caiffa-Damas, Damas-a-Caiffa in various forms. After the extension of the Egyptian railway via Gaza and Jaffa to Haifa the cds 'LAK/KAL' (Kantara-Haifa) and 'LAD/DAL' (Ludd-Haifa) were used and later 'Kantara-Haifa TPO North' and '...South', the latter in three different types.

Caiffa (Palestine)
Date de l'installation du Chemin
de fer du Hedjaz

*Turkish railway Postmarks Damas - Caiffa and Nablous - Caiffa.*
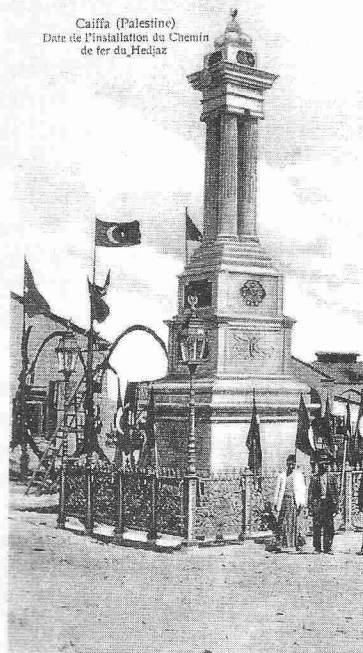
The Monument of Haifa joining Hedjaz railway, erected in 1906.

Some types of TPO (railway) cancellations to and from Haifa during the Mandate period.

Due to the civil disturbances this service was interrupted temporarily in 1930, but restarted in 1931 with cds 'Haifa-Rafa TPO' and 'Rafa-Haifa', both known in two forms.

The train Haifa-Damascus departed three times a week, while there was a daily connection with Rafa.

Types of Haifa-Rafa and Rafa-Haifa cds in use from 1931.

c. Links by Roads

In about 1915 Haifa was linked by roads to Nazareth, Jerusalem and to Damascus via Acre. The road transport was dangerous and in the winter often impossible. In 1930 a great number of roads were asphalted and the connections between the various towns and settlements were maintained by bus services like 'Egged Coop.' and 'service taxis' like 'Atid'. Sometimes they carried clandestine letters.

'Overland Mail Baghdad-Haifa' presented a special case. In 1923 the Nairn Brothers opened the 'Transdesert Mail Service' between Haifa and Baghdad via Beyruth and Damascus. The 800 km long route took 40 hours with heavy desert trucks, while before the motorized crossing, it took two months with camels. The Company carried in its trucks passengers, freight and until 1933, also post. In 1925 a Druse rebellion erupted in Libanon and the service was halted temporarily.

Overland route Baghdad - Haifa

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Various handstamps and stickers were used for the postal service with the text 'Baghdad-Haifa', mostly in English, sometimes in French. Only on the circular handstamp do we find the placenames Haifa, Beyrout, Damascus, Baghdad in order of the route.

In 1941 the service had to cease its activities altogether.
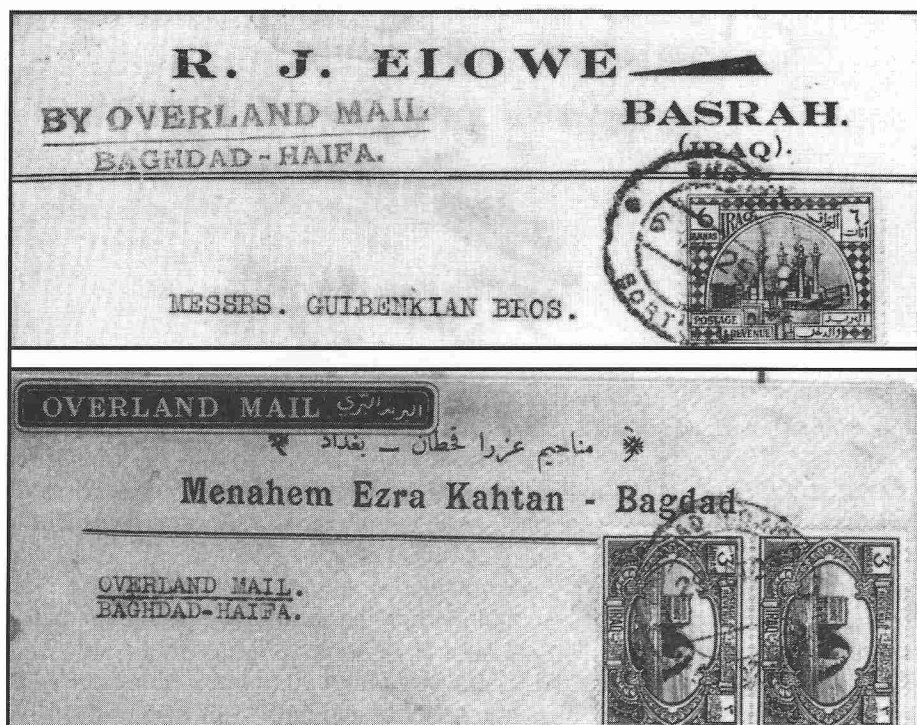
Letter with handstamp, 'By Overland Mail Baghdad-Haifa' and a letter with sticker, 'Overland Mail'.

Nairn Company's handstamp Overland Desert Mail Haifa-Beyrout- Damascus-Baghdad.

d. The Air Links

Haifa also had a role to play in the development of air links with the Holy Land. A number of airlines chose Haifa as their terminal or transit station for some of their routes on which they practically always carried mail. The first airline plying Haifa had a short life of 6 weeks only. It was managed by the RAF in 1919, flying for some time between Alexandria and Gaza/Jericho.

In 1929 and 1931 the 'Graf Zeppelin' made overflights of Palestine. It also carried mail and there are a few letters in existence with arrival handstamp 'Haifa'.

Letter from the Zeppelin 1931 Egypt flight, addressed to Haifa.

British Imperial Airways flew from October, 1931 from London via Athens and Haifa to India, with a Scipio-Short seaplane that landed on the Sea of Galilee near Tiberias. On 18th April, 1932 the route was changed and it went via Cyprus-Haifa; later on it also landed in the Bay of Haifa. The airport of Haifa was inaugurated officially as early as 1934, three years before the Lydda airport (today the Ben Gurion Airport). In June 1934 the Egyptian airline 'MISR Airlines' opened a regular service Cairo-Haifa and the Polish airline 'LOT' opened its line Warsaw-Tel Aviv on 27th October, 1936 with a trial flight to Haifa. From April 1937 until the Second World War, the Italian company 'Ala Littoria' flew three times a week from Trieste via Rome and Brindisi to Haifa. In 1938 the route was extended to Khartoum and Asmara.

Israeli postage stamp Scipio-Short plane as used on the London-Haifa-Bombay route by British Airways.

Letter from the trial flight Warsaw-Haifa, October 27, 1937.

Palestine Airways was founded in 1934 and flew from August 1937 twice weekly from Lydda to Haifa with a Scion-Short seaplane S16 and later in cooperation with Air France, daily, the route Tel Aviv-Haifa. During the Second World War the airport of Haifa was in use as a military airport.

A first flight letter Rome-Haifa per Ala Littoria, April 7, 1937

Itinerary of Palestine Airways, 1940: Tel Aviv-Haifa-Beyruth, v.v.

Israeli postage stamp with Scion-short plane used on Lydda-Haifa route by the Palestine Airways

21. World War II

In addition to the normal post offices, military post offices operated in Haifa during the war years (1939 - 1945); apart from those of the British forces there were offices of the other allied nations which were stationed in Haifa in those days. The British had in Haifa the big 'Field Post Office 731'; from 1940 and 1941 there are also letters bearing the cds 'FPO 120',
The other military post offices which we know of in Haifa are:

cds 'FPO 120' and '731', used in Haifa in 1940 and 1941
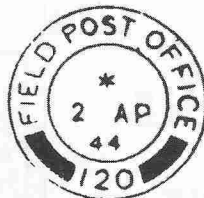
a. The Australian First Corps Base 'AIFFPO 14' (June 1941- January 1942).
b. The Indian detachment 'FPO 116' and 'R-4'

c. The American army, 'APO 1227' from July 7, 1942 - April 30, 1943

**FPO handstamps of the Indian detachment in Haifa, 1942 - 1947.**

d. The Liaison Office of the "Free French" forces which had a circular handstamp: "Forces Francaises Libres au Levant".

Cachets used by the "Free French" in Haifa

e. The depot for supply to the Soviet Union had a circular handstamp reading, 'Anglo-Soviet-Iranian-Censorship'.
f. A Polish detachement of women helpers in Nazareth, with the Polish military

*The handstamp of the 'Depot-Anglo-Soviet-Goods-Traffic' in Haifa*
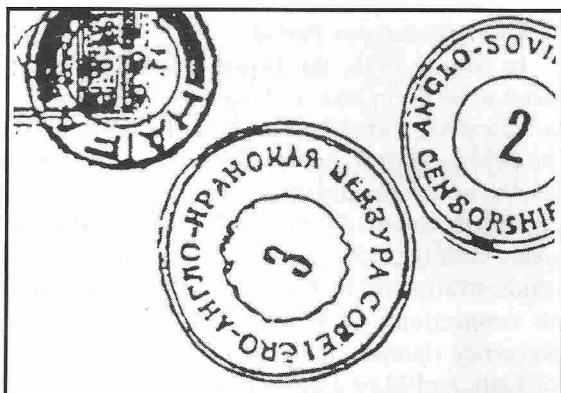
cds '141' which was connected to Haifa where they used the 'FPO 28' and 'S 257' handstamps.

g. The Greek Airforce wing, a contingent from Belgian Congo and a Polish detachment (from September 1939 - May 1945) used the 'FPO 731'.

Cds of the Polish detachment No. 141

Letters to and from abroad were censored. One of the big Censor offices, subordinated to the Central Censor Service in Jerusalem, was located in Haifa. During the war a number of Censor stickers had been used, a part of which were printed by the Greek Monastery in Jerusalem, which explains the letters GCP on the labels (Greek Convent Press). The labels have the text: 'Opened by Censor' or 'Opened by Examiner' and some letters and numbers. The number 71/........ was used in Haifa, as well as the square and the Hexagonal handstamps with the letter H in front of the number.

PC 22.

OPENED BY

CENSOR.

71/11033

P1541—830000—3.4.40—G.C.P.
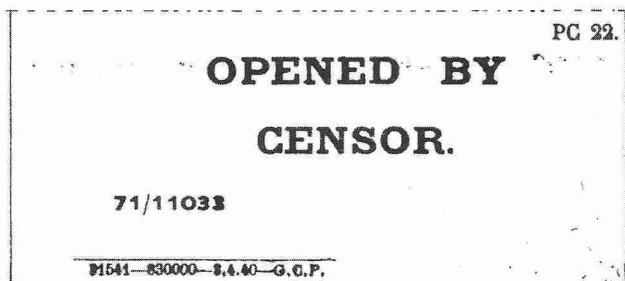
Censor label '71/.....', used in Haifa

PALESTINE.
PASSED BY
CENSOR
H.17
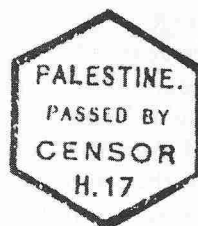
Hexagonal censor hand-stamp 'H.17',used in Haifa, 1939 - 1945.

22. The 1948 Interim Period

In March 1948, the British authorities announced that they were closing all postal services, in and to Palestine. On April 13 this was officially made known to the Universal Postal Union. Thus Palestine was no longer a member of the UPU. The Jewish leaders, however, would not let the internal and external communications be so totally disrupted, thereby isolating the country from the world. When the British closed the post offices, they were often opened again the next day, mostly with the same personnel, but under the authority of "Minhelet Ha'am" (the Administration of the People). With private companies, ships and chartered aircraft the connections with the world were maintained and with special services, emergency stamps, etc. the inland postal services were kept going.

Until mid May, stamps of the Mandate kept their validity but they were sold in post offices until April 30. The first Israeli stamps, the Doar Ivri stamps only appeared on May 16. The Interim Period existed thus from the 1st to the 15th of May, 1948.

Due to the chaotic situation, the Mandate postal service was not ended at the same time all over the country. For Haifa the following timing is valid:

May 5 : Last day of Mandate post administration.
May 10: Reopening of the Main Post Office under Interim Minhelet Ha'am administration.
May 14: Last day of Interim administration.
May 16: First day of DOAR IVRI stamps. In the outskirts Ahuzat Samuel the Mandate cds was in use during the entire Interim period.

From the Interim period in Haifa the following particulars are known.

1. 'Kofer Hayishuv' Stamps

From October 1938, special labels were sold in Palestine with the inscription 'Kofer Hayishuv', i.e., 'Taxation for the Jewish Population'. The money collected was used for all types of social activities. The stamps were used, for example, to pay legalizing taxes, taxi post etc. During the Interim period they were used as postage stamps without overprints. Letters franked with these stamps which really passed through the post are scarce and especially in Tel Aviv many of these stamps were cancelled to order without being postally used. From Haifa only a few such commercial letters are known.

2. 'DOAR' Overprints

The Jewish National Fund (JNF), founded in 1901, issued many propaganda labels during the years, using the money collected to buy land and to finance planting of forests in Israel. Towards the end of March, 1948 the 'Minhelet Ha'am' decided to overprint a great number of these labels with the word DOAR (post) and allowed them to be used for mail franking. In Haifa this overprint had a specific form of which two types are known: a circle of 16-17 mm diameter with the letters 'DOAR' inside. The Interim period ended on May 15, 1948, but the 'DOAR' overprinted stamps could be used until May 22. After that date, only Israeli stamps were valid. From May 6, also JNF labels with a one line 'DOAR' overprint from

Part of a letter with Kofer Hayishuv stamp.

Tel Aviv were used in Haifa, as the local supply ran out. Genuine letters, postally used, with the 'DOAR' overprinted stamps are scarce, especially from Haifa, where much fabricated material exist.

Letter with 'DOAR' overprints on JNF stamps, postally used,
*May 9, 1948*

A certain Mr. Shapiro produced a large number of forgeries, the most outstanding difference in his forgery being in the letter Aleph of the 'DOAR' (דאר) overprint.
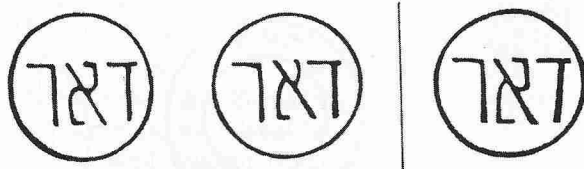
'DOAR' overprints of Haifa: the two left ones genuine,
the right one
is the Shapiro forgery.

3. The Hagana Post

The 'Hagana', the Jewish defense organization, looked after its own postal traffic, because of the need for secrecy and reliability. The cancellations used by the Haifa Hagana Post are shown on the cover below. Later when the I.D.F. Military Post was established in May '48 Haifa post base became it's center for the northern part of the country and was designated "בסיס ב'" (Base B). The postmark of the Military post office was "משרד 4" (MISRAD 4).
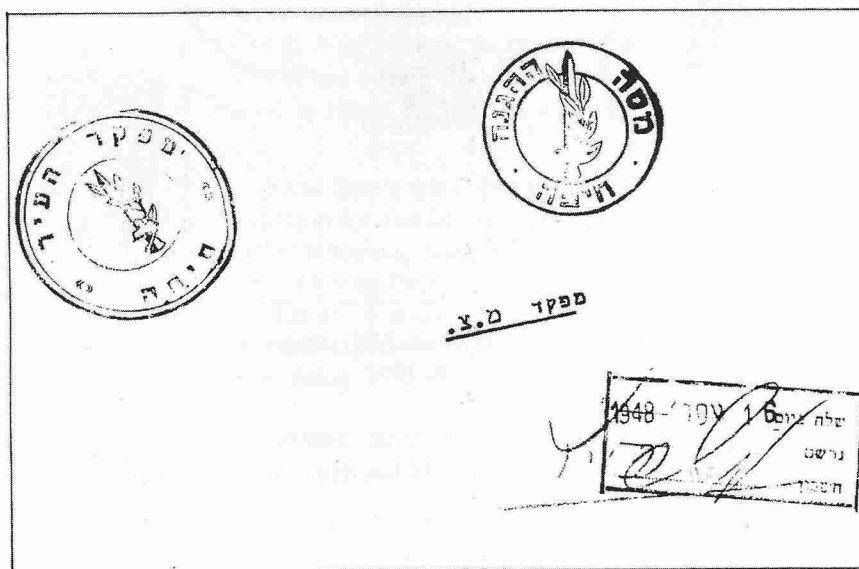
Hagana letter, April 16, 1948

4. The Emergency Post of Nahariya via Haifa

By the beginning of March, 1948, the Western Galilee and Nahariya were cut off from the rest of the country, apart from the coastal road via Haifa. On 17 March, when the Arabs succeeded in blocking the Acre-Nahariya road, the final link was severed. After that time two (unofficial) communication "services" were in operation - the so-called Mary Line and a Mediterranean Sea motor launch. The former, named after the patriotic girl-friend of an officer of the British Transport Company, operated until 8 April. Through the co-operation of this officer, letters, parcels, food and essential military supplies were transported in British Army vehicles passing in both directions through the Arab town of Acre.

On 22 March a motor launch owned by the Haifa Ogen co-operative established a sea link between Haifa and besieged Nahariya. It made almost daily journeys, bringing mail, food, ammunition and Hagana members to the "port" of Nahariya (a make-shift jetty), thus helping to break the Arab blockade. Under the authority of the Minhelet Ha'am, the Mishmar Ha'am (National Guard) arranged for special postmark for the mail service, for which a fee was charged :20 mil for ordinary letters and 50 mil for registered letters. In use for the first day only (22 March) was a circular-shaped cancellation, reading (in Hebrew) "The isolated Galilee, Nahariya," the time of posting being written in by hand. For the following two days a circular cancellation with an additional horizontal legend, reading "The isolated Western Galilee, (in two straight lines), Nahariya, (in a circle)" was in use; and from 25 March to 20 April a similar cancellation was used, with the words "Emergency Post to Haifa " added. Thereafter, from 21 to 25 April, the legend was inverted to read "Post to Haifa, emergency," and from 25 April to the 3rd week of June the words "By sea" were added in Hebrew and English. On arrival in Haifa, the mail was franked with the proper amount of valid stamps (in addition to the Nahariya franking) and transferred to the general post office for onward transmission to the addressees.

A cover from Nahariya to Tel Aviv carried by the Nahariya "Emergency Post to Haifa" on 26 March, 1948, with the "Isolated Western Galilee" slogan of the 3rd type.

On 25 April Nahariya council adopted a resolution authorizing the immediate issue of special "Emergency Post" stamps for use on outgoing mail, and of municipality tax labels (10m. yellow, 11m. red) on incoming mail for the collection of delivery fees. The first 10m. stamps, printed in blue in sheets of eight (normally with a vertical gutter), appeared rouletted and perforated; some were printed vertically rouletted and horizontally imperforated. Such was the demand for stamps that the council was compelled to order a further, and larger, printing, this time inscribed "Emergency Mail". Of these series, in imperforate sheets of four, again sheets of 10m. (blue), of 20m. (red) and of 50m. (green) were printed and issued on 16 May. Concurrently, to celebrate the declaration of Israel independence, 10,000 souvenir sheets were issued on yellow paper, each with three stamps in their original colours.
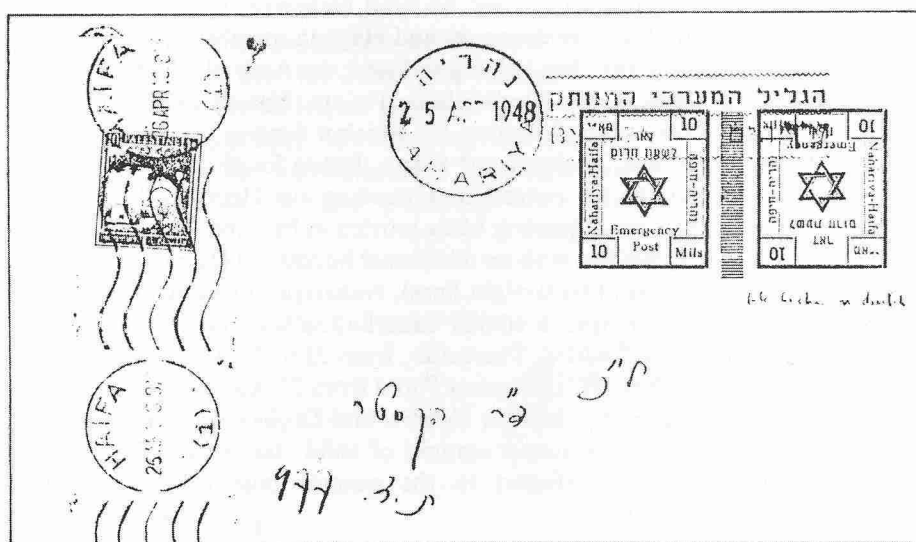
Emergency post Nahariya-Haifa, posted April 25, 1948
with cds arrival Haifa, April 26.

5. Bus and Taxi Post

The bus companies 'Egged' and 'Drom-Yehuda' also carried post, parcels and newspapers during the Interim period. From 'Egged' in Haifa we know of two handstamps: 'Sherutei Egged' (Egged Services) and 'German Colony'.

Other means of postal traffic were the intertown taxi services such as 'ATID' and 'AVIV'. The franking cost was rather high, but so were the risks the drivers took.

Express letter sent with Egged bus service from Petach Tiqva to Haifa. Top right: the Egged 'Express' label.

'Arieh' Taxi letter from Tel Aviv to Haifa.

The bus services ran from Haifa to Tel Aviv and back; the taxi services also frequented some smaller towns, mostly in the coastal plain. Labels were used on the letters to note the necessary information. From the Interim period not many such postal items are known.

6. The Haifa Messengers Service

From January 1948, a messenger service functioned in Haifa carrying the post between town quarters and the outskirts, through streets which were often dangerous to pass. The messengers introduced thenselves to the public by the following circulur:

"We are honoured to announce the establishment of a messenger service, called: 'The messengers' (HaShlichim), for the forwarding of small parcels, prospectes, invitations, letters etc., in Hadar HaCarmel, Downtown, Mount Carmel, Ahuzah and Bat Galim.

A number of businessmen have kindly provided us with space on their premises for our stations, which are situated at the following addresses:

1. 13 Ha-Nevi'im Street (Cafe Riga, Tel 2302);
2. 17 Herzl Street, Jacobs, Flower shop across the road from Heftziba;
3. 38 Herzl Street, M'kor Hasefer, Books and Magazines, Tel 2479;
4. 59 Herzl Street, Pordess Radio Shop;
5. 18 Hechalutz Street, Shmuel & Berger, Watchmakers and radios, across the road from 14 bus stop;
6. 48 Hechalutz Street, S. Maletz's, Paper and Books, across the road from WIZO;
7. 7 Nordau Street, HaMehandess, Photography and Technical Supply, POB 2167;
8. 22 Nordau Street, L. Zuckerbecker, Toys, stationery and Flowers;
9. Mount Carmel Center, Teik's Flower shop.
We promise a quick and efficient service to your full satisfaction,

The Messenger Group."

After some time a few of these addresses were cancelled, new ones being substituted. Due to the growing insecurity, the area where items could be delivered was later restricted to Hadar and Downtown.

In each of the "stations" the group issued "stamps" of their own, which they affixed to the mail delivered by them. The two denominations were produced on ordinary gummed and perforated labels, such as might be bought at any stationery store. The top line read 'Kvutzat Hashlichim' (Messenger Group), the second line 'Nitkabel' (Received) and the third line '15 mil' or '20 mil' in red or violet. A special cancellation was also used. The 15m. stamp paid the postage on an ordinary letter within the limits of Hadar HaCarmel, and 20m. covered the cost outside these limits. Registered mail was charged at double rate. At first, printed mail in open envelopes was accepted for a fee of 5m., but this was found to be unprofitable and soon discontinued. Later, small parcels were carried at a rate of 30m., with an additional 15m. if registered.

Stamps were also available outside the "stations" at the request of institutions or firms whose volume of mail was considerable and who found it more convenient to frank letters at their own offices. In such cases the senders brought the mail duly franked to one of the "stations." When delivering registered letters, the messengers at first demanded signatures of the addressees on the backs of the envelopes, which they returned to the senders as proof of delivery. Many of the addressees, however, refused to part with the covers and the group was obliged to introduce a system of

Hashlichim Messenger Service "stamps" affixed to registered cover carried within Downtown Haifa, 5 May, 1948.

receipts. These were initially mere scraps of paper, written in pencil; but when the scheme prospered and the group decided to lend a more "official" air to the service they introduced printed receipts.

The service was active till May 10, '48. Altogether it carried some 35,000 postal items.

7. The Haifa "T overprints"

On the day of issue of the first Israeli stamps no Postage Due stamps existed: they were not available before May 29. To be able to take care of letters which were

Letter with T overprint of a late date, May 31, 1948.

insufficiently or incorrectly franked, the postal service of Haifa used, till the end of May, the existing T (Tax) Mandate mark, usually with the square frame handstamp 'To Pay .....Mils'. Many of these letters are however 'fabricated', especially those cancelled on May 30 or 31.

This T overprint was used also after the Interim period.

8. The "Tohu Wabohu" overprints

A philatelist from Haifa overprinted, as a joke, some Mandate stamps with the phrase: 'Government Tohu wabohu', (Wild and Empty) after Genesis 1, 2. A hundred letters with these overprints went through the post, some of them were sent even abroad and delivered there. Naturally this was a pure private matter.

Mandate stamp with Tohu Wabohu overprint

23. Epilogue

On May 16, 1948 the first postage stamps of the independent State of Israel were issued, the well known 'DOAR IVRI' set (Hebrew Post), in 9 values.

These stamps were designed, printed, perforated and distributed in deep secret. Haifa was, with Tel Avia the only town where, on May 16, 1948 an official First Day Cover and special cancellation were used.

The further developments and postal history of Haifa will not be discussed in this publication, as Haifa is from here on part of the postal history of the State of Israel, and does not command a special position.

Israel First Day Cover with DOAR IVRI stamps Nos 1-6, cancelled Haifa, May 16, 1948.

24. Bibliography

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Addendum: Postal Tariffs

1. Turkish Era*:

The postal tariff was*:

1. Till 1874: Printed matter:

up to 5 dirham, per 4-hours-journey –	1 para
5-10 dirham, per 4-hours-journey –	2 para
any extra dirham and/or hour-journey –	1 para

Letters:

up to 3 dirham, per hour-journey –	1 para
3-4 dirham, per hour-journey –	1 1/2 para
4-5 dirham, per hour-journey –	2 para
etc.	

2. From 1874-918:

Inland: Printed matter per 50 grams –	5 para
Postcards –	10 para
Letters, Small parcels, per 20 grams –	20 para
Registerings –	40 para
Abroad: Printed matter per 50 grams –	10 para
Postcards:	20 para
Letters, Parcels etc., per 20 grams –	40 para

In Palestine the following coinage was in use or was used as face value of postage stamps:

1 piaster	: 40 para	(in all postal services)
1 franc	: 100 centimes	(German, French, Austrian postal services)
1 florin	: 100 soldi	(Austrian postal service: Lombardy, Venice)
1 rubel	: 100 kopecks	(Russian postal service)

The rate of exchange was approximately: 40 para = 30 soldi = 20 centimes = 10 kopecks. Because of changes in the exchange rates we see different frankings from 1908 onward. In principle the Turkish post office in Haifa used all the normally available Palestine stamps.

2. Mandate Era**

	Letters (20gr)	Postcards
Inland:	1918 - 1940 5 mils	1918 - 1920 3 mils
	1940 - 1941 7 mils	1920 - 1941 4 mils
	1941 - 1948 10 mils	1941- 1948 7 mils
Abroad:	Letters (20gr)	Postcards
	1918 - 1921 1 piaster	1918 - 1921 4 mils
	1921 - 1932 13 mils	1921 - 1922 6 mils
		1923 - 1925 8 mils
		1925 - 1932 7 mils
	1932 - 1943 15 mils	1932 - 1940 8 mils
		1940 - 1943 10 mils
	1943 - 1948 20 mils	1943 - 1948 13 mils

Airmail: 1938 - 1939 5 mils,   1939 - 1943 8 mils,   1943 - 1948 10 mils;
Registration: 1918 - 1921 1 piaster,   1921 - 1940 13 mils, 1940 - 1948 15 mils.
    ** In 1948 post from England was sent only to important places in Palestine.
See also, "The Postal History of British Palestine," E. B. Proud, 1985.
3. Interim Period: (As in the Mandate last period)
    Letters - 10 mils, Postcards -10 mils, Printed matter - 3 mils, Newspapers -2 mils;
    Registering - 15 mils, Express - 40 mils.

More about Beersheba Registered Turkish Mail

T. Karpovsky

The first recorded registered mail item of the Turkish Post Office in Beersheba was described by this author in a previous issue of this bulletin (Fig. 1) [1]. This was followed by a response article of a much respected philatelist, S.P. Ladany [2], stating that in his opinion the item was not a registered one. "A quick glance..." at the poor black & white reproduction of the postcard was all he needed to arrive to his conclusion. As he says, he even did not have to read the article... No wonder that his conclusion is a superficial one. It is also absolutely wrong. Let us refer to the arguments raised by him.
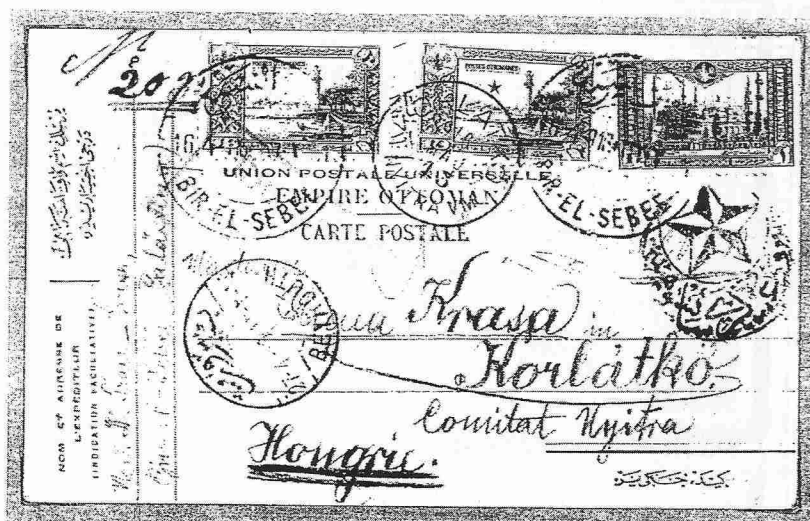

Figure. 1

The registration Number. Ladany claims that the "No. 203" on the postcard is not a registration number but rather a sequential number by the writer of the postcard. His conclusion is based on calligraphic identity found by him between the R - No. and the address proving that both had been written by the same person.

Experienced philatelist should know that black & white photographs have limitations. Such photographs do not show colours. In fact, the registration No. and the address are written in different colours and inks! The address is written by some kind of indelible pencil in blackish-violet, while the R-No., "No. 203", is written by pen in black ink. As to the form of the letters, the oblique form of the letter "N" of "No." has no parallel in the address.

In case this is not enough to disprove Ladany's argument, let us refer to a second registered letter from Beersheba (Fig. 2). This is the second Beersheba
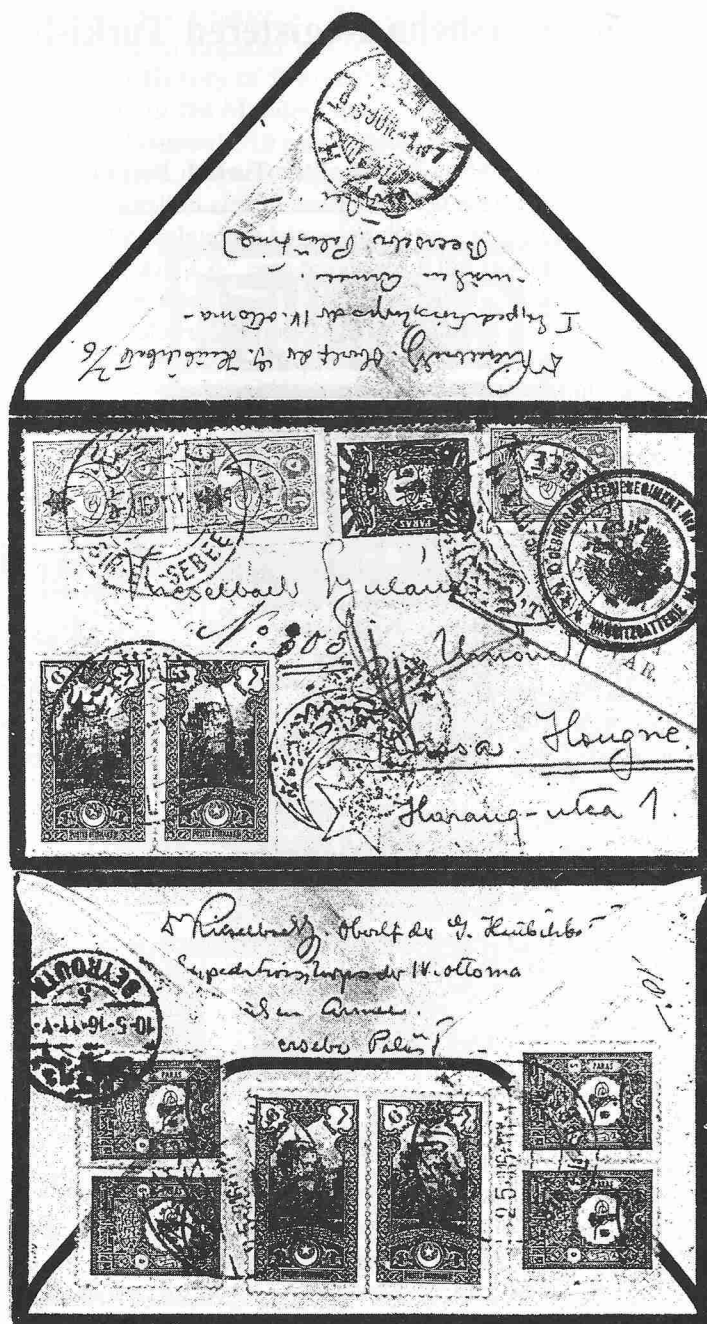
Figure 2

registered letter mentioned by Ladany. It was mailed on 2 May 1916 - 17 days later than the registered postcard. It was written by another person in blue ink. This envelope has a registration number "No. 305". This number is almost identical in every respect - in its ink and shape of its characters - to the R-No. of the registered postcard. The similarities between the Nos., the figures "3" and "0" and the double underlines are clearly evident. There can be no doubt that both R-Nos. were not written by one of the writers of the postcard or letter, but by a third person - a post office official.

People that use to mark sequential numbers on mail do that on all their letters to a certain address, otherwise there is no point in doing it. The writer of the above registered postcard sent another registered postcard, from El-Arish to the same address on 4 July 1916 (Fig. 3). No sequential marking can be seen!

There is also a postcard which was shown to us by Ladany, (Ref. (2), Fig. 88) written by the writer of the registered envelope. Again, no sequential number can be

Fig. 3: Registered postcard from El-Arish, dated 4/7/16, from same sender to same address. Stamps cancelled with F.P.O. 46 and large box registration mark.

seen on its front. Thus we know that these writers did not have the habit of numbering their mail, and the theory that these R-Nos. are sequential Nos. fails completely.

Beersheba P.O.: Ladany describes Beersheba of WWI as "a tiny place in the middle of the desert". Scholars of the history of Beersheba tell a different story. WWI Beersheba was a small town with a population of around 3000 in 1915. It was a main logistic center and the staging point for the southern front with railway connection to the heart of the Ottoman Empire. One may expect that the postmaster of such a place has the ability to draw two parallel lines...

Already in 1909 Beersheba post office was included in the U.P.U. list. More important, in the same year it was mentioned in the Ottoman PTT list as accepting registered mail to all destinations! Why then is it hard to accept the existence of such mail? The fact that a collector "thoroughly inspected many thousands of auction catalogues of 32 (!!!) countries in a variety of languages", read every published article concerning the history of Beersheba but was unable to detect any Ottoman period registered item might be impressive, but is totally irrelevant. It does not mean that such mail cannot exist. A valid reason to expect the existence of registered mail is the Beersheba Money Order of 1914 in Anon's exhibit (Ref. (2), Fig. 79).

The writers. Ladany wonders why soldiers use the Turkish post while they enjoyed free franking privilege. The writers of the two registered items were officers who might not have free mail privilege. But even if they had this privilege, how could they send their mail? They could not mail it through any foreign post office as these had been closed down by late 1914. There were yet - at this time - no German field post offices in Palestine. Could they use courier services? Probably they could, but not through a near post office. We do not know if this was available on a regular basis and whether it was at that time considered to be more efficient than the Turkish post. But could these writers send **registered** mail through any other channel other than the Turkish Post? Absolutely not. The Turkish post was the only way to send **registered** mail.

In Figure 3 we saw another registered postcard mailed by the person who sent the first one. It was mailed in El-Arish bearing a rectangular boxed registration handstamp, the stamps cancelled by a "FPO 46" postmark. The "R" handstamp is known to have been used in El-Arish at that time period. It demonstrates that this gentleman preferred, at least occasionally, to send his mail registered.

Mail sent by German or Austrian army personnel through the Turkish post in Palestine is not uncommon. Both writers of the registered postcard and letter are known to have used this postal service on at least one more occasion.

The Franking. The frankings on both Beersheba items correspond to the registered mail rates. The postcard bears stamps of 1 1/2 piasters, the rate for registered postcard to foreign countries.

Contrary to Ladany's statement that the registered letter "had a franking of ... less than the foreign registration rate for envelopes", it has a franking of 84 paras. This is a slight overfranking of the 2 piasters (80 paras) registered letter rate to foreign countries, not an underfranking.

Ladany's cites Perrys article concerning Turkish rates [3]. Perry published in an interesting article the results of his study of the implementation of the war Orphans Surtax and the rate changes of WWI. His conclusion and summary have to be evaluated in this context. Ladany uses Perry's summary out of this context. In case that an incorrect franking is detected on registered mail, what franking should one expect to find most probable? - The answer is clear and so the correct franking of "our" postcard and the slight overfranking of the letter - though not being a definite proof that the two items were registered - do heavily support this claim.

To summarize: two registered items of the Turkish Post in Beersheba have been discovered lately. These items were mailed by officers of the German Expedition Corp that regularly used the Turkish post. The registration Nos. of these items are given in manuscript, a usual procedure of the Turkish post at that period. Both items bear proper franking and show evidence of treatment that fits registered mail, and both have certificates issued by a prominent expert.

It is not possible for me to conclude without a word to the editors. While it is within the scope of this bulletin to detect forgeries and "fight" against them, not everything is printable. Claims that items may be forged must be based on some evidence or arguments. At the end of his article, Ladany says that the registered envelope "raises questions whether the numbers were applied for sequential numbering ... or were added recently to take advantage of philatelic demand". Just like that, with no support to this claim that the items might be forged (well, except for the false statement that the franking on one item is less than required). Casting shadow of doubt on an item without proper examination, without discussing the matter with experts in the subject and without substantiating the claim is an unethical, to say the least. It should have been avoided, as this bulletin is dear to us all.

References

(1) Karpovsky I., "Beersheba Registered Letters of the Ottoman Period", HLPH, Vol. IV, No. 79-80, pp. 693-694.
(2) Ladany S., "The Recently Discovered Ottoman "Registered" Postcard from BeerSheba - Is It Really a Registered Item?", HLPH Vol. V No. 81-82, pp. 63-73.
(3) Perry R., "Turkish Palestine Civilian Mail During WWI and the War Orphan's Surtax-Rates and Dates", The Israel Philatelist, Vol. L, No. 6 pp. 465-467.

More on Registered Mail from the Ottoman Post Office in Beersheba

George H. Muentz.

1. German and Austrian units arrived in Palestine in April 1916 and were assigned to the Expeditionary Corps assembled by the Ottoman High Command for the conquest of the Suez Canal. Before the opening of the German Military Mission Field Post, the Germans and Austrians could send mail via the irregular German Army courier service, the Turkish Field Post or the Ottoman civilian post offices.

2. Soldiers up to the rank of sergeant were exempt from postage at the Turkish Field Post offices for inland letters. Foreign correspondence and all mail sent by higher ranks had to be fully prepaid. The civilian post offices accepted prepaid mail only.

3. The German Military Mission F.P. offices did not accept registered mail from individual members of the forces. The Ottoman field post and civilian post offices accepted prepaid registered mail without restrictions.

4. In July 1915 the Ottoman postal administration introduced a War Charity surtax. However, between July 8, 1915 and July 14, 1916 foreign correspondence was exempt from surtax and foreign postage rates remained at the pre-war level: 20 para for a postcard, 1 piastre for a letter up to 20 gr. and 1 piastre registration fee.

Ralph Perry's excellent article in the last December issue of The Israel Philatelist deals mainly with the "confusion on whether to pay the surtax or not".

5. After the publication of the articles on registered mail from Beersheba in the Holy Land Postal History bulletins Nos. 79/80 and 81/82, three additional registered items sent by the two Austrian officers have been reported. Dr. Kesselbach is the sender of a registered letter from El-Arish (Fig. 1). This cover, dated August 25, 1916, is illustrated in Steichele's "Ottoman Post Offices in Palestine" German edition (pp. 1035-36). On June 1, 1916, Dr. Krasa sent a registered letter from Jerusalem (Fig. 2), and on July 4, 1916 he was in El-Arish and sent another registered postcard via the Ottoman Field Post Office No. 46.

6. All 5 items of registered mail sent by the two officers are family correspondence.

7. The Post Office in Beersheba is listed in the Ottoman PTT lists of 1909 and 1914 among the offices accepting registered mail. (See: Norman Collins, "The Ottoman Post and Telegraph Offices in Palestine", Sahara Publications Ltd., 2000, p.56).

We have shown that facts do not support Ladany's assumption (in his article in HLPH 81/82) that the 2 items from Beersheba are not samples of the registered mail. His other arguments are pure speculations:

1. I have not seen "serial" correspondence from Palestine with a number over 100. It would be impossible for an army officer to send 200 items of mail in one month or over 300 in two months.

2. The assumption that an Ottoman postal clerk must have been illiterate is ridiculous.

3. The fact that registration receipts from Beersheba have not been found is meaningless. Has anyone seen an R-receipt from Acre (where 20 R-letters with numbers up to 1182 (!!) have been recorded), from Afula (two May 1917 R-letters with manuscript R-numbers - just like in Beersheba - are known to-date) and so on.

And last but by far not the least: the regrettable suggestion of a fraud made without a shred of proof.

Fig. 1: Aug 25, 1916 R-letter sent by Lt. Dr. Kesselbach from El-Arish, via Ottoman Field Post office #46
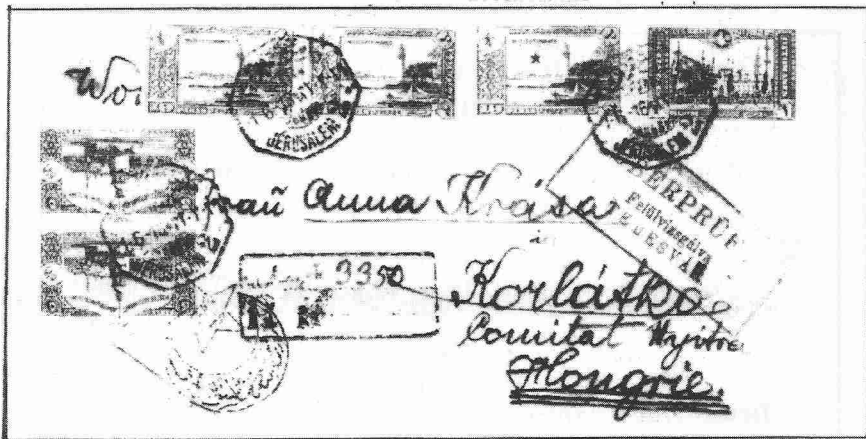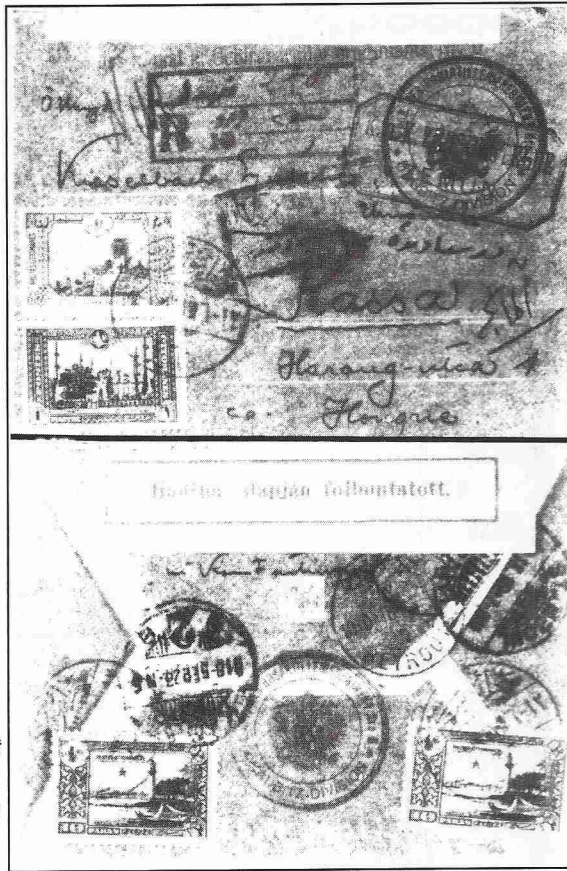
Fig. 2: June 1, 1916 R-letter sent by Dr. Krasa from Jerusalem (courtesy Bale Holyland Catalogue, 1999).

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(See article, p. 207)